

**RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS BUDGET HEARING
December 9, 2020 at 11:00 A.M.
By Zoom Teleconference**

Present: Greg Higel, President; Armando Valdez, Vice-President; Dwight Martin, Secretary/Treasurer; Peggy Godfrey, Director; Steve Keller, Director; Zeke Ward, Director; Mike Kruse, Director; Cory Off, Director; and Bill McClure, Director.

Staff and Consultants: David Robbins, Hill & Robbins P.C.; Cleave Simpson, General Manager; Clinton Phillips, District Engineer; Amber Pacheco, Program Manager; Marisa Fricke, Program Manager; Chris Ivers, Program Manager; Rose Vanderpool, Program Assistant; Linda Ramirez, Program Assistant; Cheryl Anderson, Office Manager; Michael Carson, Database Administrator; and April Mondragon, Administrative Assistant.

Guests: Lisa Sigler, Ernie Myers, Patrick Shea, Bryn Phinney, Brad Grassmick, Les Alderete, Darin Schepp, William Myers, Daniel Davis, Heather Dutton, and Dave Hofmann.

CALL TO ORDER

President Greg Higel called the meeting to order at 11:09 a.m. There was a quorum present for the meeting.

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF AND GUESTS

President Greg Higel welcomed all those present and asked for introductions.

APPROVE AGENDA

President Higel asked for amendments or a motion to approve the agenda. The Board agreed to have a public comment period after each Subdistrict budget presentation rather than having public comment after approval of the agenda. An executive session was added to the agenda after approval of the agenda. A motion was made by Cory Off to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Peggy Godfrey and unanimously approved.

Executive Session

President Higel asked for a motion to enter into executive session to receive legal advice concerning Subdistrict No. 1 budget litigation. A motion was made by Dwight Martin to enter into executive session. The motion was seconded by Cory Off and unanimously approved.

Mr. Robbins stated the Board was entering into executive session to receive legal advice concerning Subdistrict No. 1 budget litigation. The Board would take no formal action or position during the executive session.

Action on Executive Session Discussion

Mr. Robbins stated the Board was in executive session and had voted to come out. Discussion was related to Subdistrict No. 1 budget litigation. President Higel announced for the record no formal action was taken was taken during the executive session.

2021 BUDGET HEARING

President Higel called the 2021 budget hearing to order and announced the publication notice of hearing information.

- ***Resolution to approve the FY2021 Budget***

SD#1 Budget Public Comment

President Higel asked for public comments regarding SD #1 Budget. Brad Grassmick introduced himself as the attorney representing North East Well Users Association, he reported on an email outlining objection to Subdistrict No. 1 budget. Mr. Grassmick summarized the objections contained in the email and provided a proposed path forward.

President Higel thanked Mr. Grassmick for his comments.

Peggy Godfrey commented on the Closed Basin Project and the possible connection to Subdistrict No. 1 budget. Director McClure suggested they resume discussions regarding the budget.

SD #2 Budget Public Comment

President Higel asked for public comment regarding SD #2 Budget. There were none.

SD #3 Budget Public Comment

President Higel asked for public comment regarding SD #3 Budget. There were none.

SD #4 Budget Public Comment

President Higel asked for public comment regarding SD #4 Budget. There were none.

SD #5 Budget Public Comment

President Higel asked for public comment regarding SD #5 Budget. Director McClure questioned a potential property acquisition, Mr. Simpson explained it would be apart of the District budget.

SD #6 Budget Public Comment

President Higel asked for public comment regarding SD #6 Budget. There were none.

Rio Grande Water Conservation District Budget Public Comment

President Higel asked for public comment regarding the Rio Grande Water Conservation District Budget. Cleave Simpson reported receiving a recalculation on Tabor and provided the amended levy amount. Director Martin questioned the professional services amount, Mr. Simpson provided an explanation of why the funds were budgeted. Director Off stated the Board of Directors had the opportunity to review Subdistrict No. 1 amended budget prior to today. Director Valdez commended the Subdistrict Program Managers and staff of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District for their time and effort put into developing the most efficient way to use resources while meeting goals. Director Kruse made suggestions on how the Study Funds could be used in the future.

A motion was made by Cory Off to approve the resolution to approve the FY2021 Budget. The motion was seconded by Peggy Godfrey.

Director Kruse responded to Mr. Grassmick’s comments and explained why he would vote ‘No’ on the approval of Subdistrict No. 1 budget. Director Valdez responded to Director Kruse’s comments and explained why he would vote in support of the budget resolution.

The motion passed with one vote of no by Mike Kruse.

- ***Resolution to appropriate monies for FY2021***

A motion was made by Cory Off to approve the resolution to appropriate monies for FY2021. The motion was seconded by Dwight Martin and unanimously approved.

- ***Resolution to set Mill Levy for 2021***

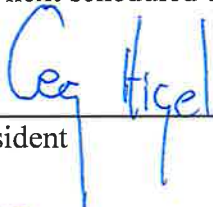
A motion was made by Cory Off to approve the resolution to set Mill Levy for 2021 at 2.35 with a temporary reduction of 0.18 to arrive at 2.17. The motion was seconded by Dwight Martin and unanimously approved.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Cory Off to adjourn the budget hearing. The motion was seconded by Dwight Martin and unanimously approved.

The budget hearing was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

The next scheduled quarterly meeting will be held on January 19, 2021.



President



Secretary/Treasurer

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT BUDGET

A RESOLUTION SUMMARIZING EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES FOR EACH FUND AND ADOPTING A BUDGET FOR THE RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, COLORADO, FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR BEGINNING ON THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY 2021 AND ENDING ON THE LAST DAY OF DECEMBER 2021

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District has appointed Cleave Simpson, General Manager, to prepare and submit a proposed budget to said governing body at the proper time, and;

WHEREAS, Cleave Simpson, General Manager, has submitted a proposed budget to this governing body on October 15, 2020, for its consideration, and;

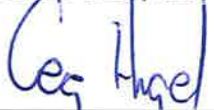
WHEREAS, Upon due and proper notice, published and posted in accordance with the law, said proposed budget was open for inspection by the public at a designated place, a public hearing was held on December 9, 2020, and interested taxpayers were given the opportunity to file or register any objections to said proposed budget, and;

WHEREAS, whatever increases may have been made in the expenditures, like increases were added to the revenues so that the budget remains in balance, as required by law.


NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, COLORADO:

- Section 1 That the budget, as submitted, amended and herein above summarized by fund hereby is approved and adopted as the budget of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District for the year stated above.
- Section 2 That the budget hereby approved and adopted shall be signed by the President and Secretary/Treasurer and made a part of the public records of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District.

ADOPTED, this 9th day of December A.D. 2020



President

Attest: 
Secretary/Treasurer

RESOLUTION FOR APPROPRIATING MONIES

A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING SUMS OF MONEY TO THE VARIOUS FUNDS, IN THE AMOUNTS AND FOR THE PURPOSES SET FORTH BELOW FOR THE RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, COLORADO, FOR THE 2021 BUDGET YEAR.

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande Water Conservation District has adopted the annual budget in accordance with the Local Government Budget Law, on December 9, 2020, and;

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande Water Conservation District has made provisions therein for revenues in an amount equal to or greater than the total proposed expenditures as set forth in said budget, and;

WHEREAS, it is not only required by law, but is also necessary to appropriate the revenues provided in the budget, to and for the purposes described below, so as not to impair the operation of the District.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, COLORADO;

Section1. That the following sums are hereby appropriated from the revenues of the District, to each fund, for the purposes stated:

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR 2021:

ADMINISTRATION: (Salaries and services, travel and expenses, Federal and State affairs, capital outlay and Equipment replacement)	<u>\$ 703,825.00</u>
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	<u>\$ 985,000.00</u>
CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES	<u>\$ 166,686.00</u>
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CONTRACT	<u>\$ 75,192.00</u>
CAPITAL OUT LAY	<u>\$ 1,055,000.00</u>
EMERGENCY RESERVE	<u>\$ 32,807.00</u>
ESTIMATED RESERVE FUND	<u>\$ 3,031,191.00</u>

ESTIMATED TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES FOR 2021 \$ 2,985,703.00

SPECIAL REVENUE FUND #1

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR 2021:

WATER MANAGEMENT-VARIABLE \$ 8,085,000.00

ADMINISTRATION \$ 522,200.00

CREP \$ 2,285,000.00

REIMBURSEMENT TO GENERAL FUND \$ 0.00

ESTIMATED RESERVE FUND \$ 4,331,483.00

SPECIAL REVENUE FUND #2

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR 2021:

WATER MANGEMENT EXPENDITURES \$ 655,000.00

ADMINISTRATION \$ 60,404.00

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES \$ 50,000.00

REIMBURSEMENT TO GENERAL FUND \$ 12,500.00

ESTIMATED RESERVE FUND \$ 3,787.00

SPECIAL REVENUE FUND #3

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR 2021:

WATER MANAGEMENT EXPENDITURES \$ 1,415,500.00

ADMINISTRATION \$ 60,260.00

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES \$ 70,000.00

REIMBURSEMENT TO GENERAL FUND \$ 5,000.00

ESTIMATED RESERVE FUND \$ 44.00

SPECIAL REVENUE FUND #4

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR 2021:

WATER MANAGEMENT EXPENDITURES	\$ <u>85,959.00</u>
ADMINISTRATION	\$ <u>47,400.00</u>
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$ <u>30,000.00</u>
REIMBURSEMENT TO THE GENERAL FUND	\$ <u>11,538.00</u>
ESTIMATED RESERVE FUND	\$ <u>0.00</u>

SPECIAL REVENUE FUND #5

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR 2021:

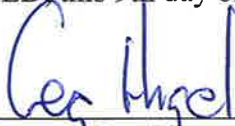
WATER MANAGEMENT EXPENDITURES	\$ <u>325,000.00</u>
ADMINISTRATION	\$ <u>58,189.00</u>
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$ <u>40,000.00</u>
REIMBURSEMENT TO THE GENERAL FUND	\$ <u>19,552.00</u>
ESTIMATED RESERVE FUND	\$ <u>1,500.00</u>

SPECIAL REVENUE FUND #6

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR 2021:

WATER MANAGEMENT EXPENDITURES	\$ <u>2,263,500.00</u>
ADMINISTRATION	\$ <u>78,900.00</u>
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$ <u>90,000.00</u>
REIMBURSEMENT TO GENERAL FUND	\$ <u>10,000.00</u>
ESTIMATED RESERVE FUND	\$ <u>1,499.00</u>

ADOPTED, this 9th day of December A.D. 2020



President

Attest:



Secretary/Treasurer

RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

	PRIOR YEAR 2019	CURRENT YEAR 2020	ADOPTED YEAR 2021
GENERAL FUND			
Beginning Fund Balance	\$3,540,263	\$3,701,022	\$3,856,176
Revenues			
Taxes	\$1,360,065	\$1,360,635	\$1,409,917
Intergovernmental Revenue	\$166,964	\$77,913	\$75,212
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$171,751	\$271,961	\$175,588
Total Revenues	\$1,698,780	\$1,710,508	\$1,660,718
Expenditures			
Salaries and Fringe	\$521,289	\$441,610	\$481,217
Travel	\$19,267	\$9,506	\$16,500
Office Expense	\$89,847	\$88,503	\$105,108
Professional Services	\$360,684	\$527,975	\$985,000
Other General Government	\$319,889	\$57,986	\$101,000
Conservation of Natural Resources	\$59,193	\$151,180	\$166,686
Bureau of Reclamation Contract	\$167,852	\$150,385	\$75,192
Capital Outlay	\$0	\$21,261	\$1,055,000
Total Expenditures	\$1,538,021	\$1,448,406	\$2,985,703
Other Financing Sources			
Transfer in from Subdistrict #1,2,3,5,6 Special Revenue Fund	\$0	\$0	\$500,000
Other Financial Use			
Property acquisition for Subdistrict #1 Special Revenue Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transfer money out to Subdistrict #2 Special Revenue Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transfer money out to Subdistrict #3 Special Revenue Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transfer money out to Subdistrict #4 Special Revenue Fund	\$0	\$42,276	\$0
Transfer money out to Subdistrict #5 Special Revenue Fund	\$0	\$64,672	\$0
Transfer money out to Subdistrict #6 Special Revenue Fund	\$67,220	\$0	\$0
TABOR RESERVE	\$32,807	\$32,807	\$32,807
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over Expenditures	\$93,539	\$155,154	-\$824,985
ENDING FUND BALANCE	\$3,633,802	\$3,856,176	\$3,031,191

SUBDISTRICT #1 SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

Beginning Fund Balance (cash basis)	\$4,976,291	\$6,224,170	\$5,184,263
Operating Revenue			
Fees: Variable	\$4,957,855	\$3,183,709	\$7,432,200
Fees: Administrative	\$226,872	\$513,499	\$541,546
Fees: CREP	\$259,952	\$166,892	\$2,022,673
Fees: Contract Inclusion	\$7,000	\$23,500	\$2,000
Total Operating Revenue	\$5,451,679	\$3,887,600	\$9,998,420
Operating Expenses			
Water Management-Variable	\$7,067,255	\$4,231,733	\$8,085,000
Administrative	\$433,259	\$522,200	\$522,200
CREP	\$826,607	\$805,806	\$2,285,000

Total Operating Expenses	\$8,327,122	\$5,559,739	\$10,892,200
Nonoperating Revenue			
Interest Revenue	\$13,588	\$44,322	\$41,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$0	\$72,000	\$0
Other Financial Use			
Transfer out to Rio Grande Water Conservation District	\$0	\$0	\$0
ENDING FUND BALANCE	\$2,114,435	\$4,668,353	\$4,331,483

SUBDISTRICT #2 SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

Beginning Fund Balance	\$0	\$195,810	\$342,691
Operating Revenue			
Fees: Pumping	\$366,526	\$376,000	\$362,000
Fees: Administrative	\$65,649	\$71,000	\$75,900
Fees: Contract Inclusion	\$3,000	\$2,500	\$500
Total Operating Revenue	\$435,175	\$449,500	\$438,400
Operating Expenses			
Water Management			
Water Lease and Storage	\$103,226	\$226,277	\$655,000
Administration	\$55,885	\$50,485	\$60,404
Professional Fees	\$23,596	\$14,028	\$50,000
Reimbursement to the General Fund	\$57,220	\$12,500	\$12,500
Total Operating Expenses	\$239,927	\$303,290	\$777,904
Nonoperating Revenue			
Interest Revenue	\$562	\$672	\$600
Other Financing Source			
Transfer in from Rio Grande Water Conservation District	\$0	\$0	\$0
ENDING FUND BALANCE	\$195,810	\$342,691	\$3,787

SUBDISTRICT #3 SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

Beginning Fund Balance	\$0	\$615,301	\$922,344
Operating Revenue			
Fees: Groundwater Withdrawal	\$746,279	\$628,911	\$551,500
Fees: Administrative	\$45,259	\$65,719	\$74,360
Fees: Contract Inclusion	\$0	\$1,800	\$600
Total Operating Revenue	\$791,539	\$696,430	\$626,460
Operating Expenses			
Water Management			
Water Lease and Storage	\$69,704	\$164,933	\$1,415,500
Administration	\$62,246	\$53,906	\$60,260
Professional Fees	\$51,759	\$42,057	\$70,000
Reimbursement to the General Fund	\$0	\$130,213	\$5,000
Total Operating Expenses	\$183,709	\$391,109	\$1,550,760
Nonoperating Revenue			
Interest Revenue	\$7,471	\$1,720	\$2,000

Other Financing Source			
Transfer in from Rio Grande Water Conservation District	\$0	\$0	\$0
ENDING FUND BALANCE	\$615,301	\$922,344	\$44

SUBDISTRICT #4 SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

Beginning Fund Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0
Operating Revenue			
Fees: Groundwater Withdrawal	\$0	\$0	\$105,959
Fees: Administrative	\$0	\$0	\$66,938
Fees: Contract Inclusion	\$0	\$0	\$2,000
Total Operating Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$174,897
Operating Expenses			
Water Management			
Water Lease and Storage	\$0	\$0	\$85,959
Administration	\$0	\$32,309	\$47,400
Professional Fees	\$0	\$9,968	\$30,000
Reimbursement to the General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$11,538
Total Operating Expenses	\$0	\$42,276	\$174,897
Nonoperating Revenue			
Interest Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Financing Source			
Transfer in from Rio Grande Water Conservation District	\$0	\$42,276	\$0
ENDING FUND BALANCE	\$0	\$0	\$0

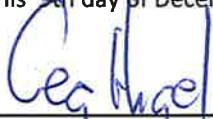
SUBDISTRICT #5 SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

Beginning Fund Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0
Operating Revenue			
Fees: Groundwater Withdrawal	\$0	\$0	\$355,000
Fees: Administrative	\$0	\$0	\$87,741
Fees: Contract Inclusion	\$0	\$0	\$1,500
Total Operating Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$444,241
Operating Expenses			
Water Management			
Water Lease and Storage	\$0	\$0	\$325,000
Administration	\$0	\$32,840	\$58,189
Professional Fees	\$0	\$31,832	\$40,000
Reimbursement to the General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$19,552
Total Operating Expenses	\$0	\$64,672	\$442,741
Nonoperating Revenue			
Interest Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Financing Source			
Transfer in from Rio Grande Water Conservation District	\$0	\$64,672	\$0
ENDING FUND BALANCE	\$0	\$0	\$1,500

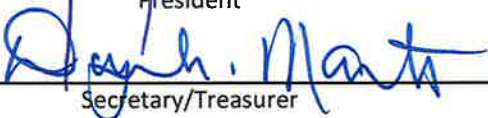
SUBDISTRICT #6 SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

Beginning Fund Balance	\$0	\$0	\$984,499
Operating Revenue			
Fees: Groundwater Withdrawal	\$0	\$1,348,751	\$1,355,000
Fees: Administrative	\$0	\$87,351	\$100,500
Fees: Contract Inclusion	\$0	\$4,200	\$900
Total Operating Revenue	\$0	\$1,440,303	\$1,456,400
Operating Expenses			
Water Management			
Water Lease and Storage	\$0	\$272,038	\$2,263,500
Administration	\$37,023	\$78,171	\$78,900
Professional Fees	\$30,198	\$32,063	\$90,000
Reimbursement to the General Fund	\$0	\$77,136	\$10,000
Total Operating Expenses	\$67,220	\$459,408	\$2,442,400
Nonoperating Revenue			
Interest Revenue	\$0	\$3,604	\$3,000
Other Financing Source			
Transfer in from Rio Grande Water Conservation District	\$67,220	\$0	\$0
ENDING FUND BALANCE	\$0	\$984,499	\$1,499

ADOPTED, this 9th day of December, 2020



President



Secretary/Treasurer

RESOLUTION TO SET MILL LEVY

A RESOLUTION LEVYING GENERAL PROPERTY TAXES FOR THE YEAR 2020 TO HELP DEFRAY THE COSTS OF GOVERNMENT FOR THE RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, COLORADO, FOR THE 2021 BUDGET YEAR.

WHEREAS, the amount of money necessary to balance the budget for general operating expenses is \$ 2,985,703.00 and:

WHEREAS, the 2020 valuation for assessment for the Rio Grande Water Conservation District as certified by the County Assessors is \$ 589,363,986.00

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Board of Directors of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District, Colorado:

Section 1 That for the purpose of meeting all general operating expenses of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District during the 2021 budget year there is hereby levied a tax of 2.35 mills upon each dollar of the total valuation for assessment of all taxable property within the District for the year 2020.

Section 2 That for the purpose of rendering a refund to its constituents during the budget year 2021, there is hereby levied a temporary mill levy reduction of 0.18 mills.

Section 3 That the General Manager is hereby authorized and directed to immediately certify to the County Commissioners of Alamosa, Conejos, Mineral, Rio Grande and Saguache Counties, Colorado, the mill levy above determined and set.

ADOPTED, this 9th day of December A.D. 2020



President

Attest:



Secretary/Treasurer



Rio Grande Water Conservation District

10900

8805 Independence Way • Alamosa, Colorado 81101

Phone: (719) 589-6301 • Fax: (719) 992-2026

Protecting & Conserving San Luis Valley Water

REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

This form is provided to allow a request for funding and a detailed explanation of a proposed project request for funding which conserves and protects the water resources of the Rio Grande Basin exclusive of Costilla County and structures associated with water courses within.

1. Name of Project: *Beyond the Rio Grande Initiative III*
2. Responsible party or entity: Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust (RiGHT)
3. Contact information:
Allen Law, Executive Director
Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust
PO Box 444
Del Norte, CO 81132
Office: 719-657-0800 allenl@riograndelandtrust.org

4. Date of request: October 14, 2020

5. Location of Project (Legal Description):

RGWCD funds would be used for recruitment and implementation of conservation projects within the Rio Grande Basin, excluding Costilla County. RiGHT expects efforts will be focused on the center of the Valley, Saguache County, or Conejos County.

____ 1/4 ____ 1/4 Section ____ Township ____ Range ____ NMPM ____

GPS Coordinates Easting _____ Northing _____

6. Detailed Description of Proposed Project: Photos attached Yes _____ No _____

In 2019 RiGHT developed a new strategic plan with three programmatic goals focused on expanding our conservation efforts to new areas, including groundwater conservation and increasing community engagement. In the conservation realm, we are continuing to conserve land and water along San Luis Valley streams while broadening our work to new areas, especially in Conejos County. We are also developing new tools, based on the conservation easement model, to reduce groundwater use in the Valley. As the Valley's only local land trust, we feel a responsibility to not only conserve land, but also be a good community partner. Through the third goal of our strategic plan, we are expanding our efforts to engage the local community in our conservation work, especially young people. For example

this year, in the face of Covid-19, we initiated a program to support local families in need and local agricultural producers through our Local Farms to Local Families program which provides local youth and families in need with locally sourced foods.

RGWCD funding will assist RiGHT with our land and groundwater conservation work. RiGHT is already working to expand our conservation efforts with fifteen active conservation easement projects split about 50/50 between *Rio Grande Initiative* projects and new geographies. In 2021 we hope to close at least five of these conservation easements, likely with two being fully donated conservation easements. During mid-2020, we finished developing a variety of groundwater conservation tools that are expected to be legally enforceable and have support from potential funders. We are now working with appraisers to understand the possible incentives and values in preparation for introducing the programs to landowners next year in collaboration with Colorado Open Lands. We already have landowners expressing interest and hope to find and implement multiple projects in 2021.

7. Amount of funding requested for proposed project from the RGWCD: \$10,000

8. Total estimated cost of proposed project:

RiGHT's 2021 operating budget for land and groundwater conservation programs is expected to be approximately \$245,000. With this operating budget, we expect to complete conservation projects with a total value of approximately \$2.5 million, including landowner donations of value. We will use RGWCD funds to support project operations, which leverages RGWCD's contribution to the greatest extent possible.

9. Cost share partners (if applicable) and amounts of funds to be contributed by each:

Landowner donation: \$1,160,000

North American Wetland Conservation Act: \$400,000

Natural Resources Conservation Service (Agricultural Land Easement program): \$320,000

Colorado Parks and Wildlife: \$220,000

LOR Foundation: \$100,000

Gates Family Foundation \$300,000

Total 2021 projects: \$2,500,000

10. Need for 404 permit required (attached authority): No

11. Approval by District: Amount \$10,000^{or} Date 12-9-2020

12. RGWCD General Manager: Approved *Clumby* Disapproved _____

13. Date Project Completed: _____

14. Documentation Completed Date: _____

Board approved as part of 2021 budget.

7. Amount of funding requested for proposed project from the RGWCD: \$12,500

8. Total estimated cost of proposed project: \$154,000

9. Cost share partners (if applicable) and amounts of funds to be contributed by each:

- Colorado Water Conservation Board Water Plan Grant - \$10,000
- EPA Environmental Education Grant - \$22,500
- Rio Grande Watershed Association of Conservation Districts - \$12,500

10. Need for 404 permits required (attached authority) Yes No X Covered by Nationwide

11. Approval by District: Amount \$12,500⁰⁰ Date 12-9-2020

12. RGWCD General Manager: Approved *[Signature]* Disapproved

13. Date Project Completed:

14. Documentation Completed Date:

Board approved as part of 2021 budget.



Rio Grande Water Conservation District

10900

8805 Independence Way • Alamosa, Colorado 81101

Phone: (719) 589-6301 • Fax: (719) 992-2026

Protecting & Conserving San Luis Valley Water

REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

This form is provided to allow a request for funding and a detailed explanation of a proposed project request for funding which conserves and protects the water resources of the Rio Grande Basin exclusive of Costilla County and structures associated with water courses within.

1. Name of Project: Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project (RGHRP)
2. Responsible party or entity: Emma Reesor, Executive Director
3. Contact information: 623 Fourth Street, Alamosa CO 81101
(719) 589-2230
emma@riograndehadwaters.org
4. Date of request: 10/20/2019
5. Location of Project (Legal Description): Rio Grande Basin
1/4 1/4 Section Township Range NMPM
GPS Coordinates Easting _____ Northing _____

6. Detailed Description of Proposed Project: Photos attached Yes _____ No _____
Formed in 2001, the RGHRP works with private entities, other nonprofit organizations, and local, state, and federal government partners to implement recommendations of The 2001 Study, a restoration master plan for 91 miles of the Rio Grande in Colorado. The mission of the RGHRP is to restore and conserve the historical functions and vitality of the Rio Grande in Colorado for improved water quality, agricultural water use, riparian health, wildlife and aquatic species habitat, recreation, and community safety. RGHRP programs include Riparian Restoration and Streambank Stabilization, In-stream Infrastructure Improvement, Watershed Stewardship, and Outreach and Education.

This is a request for \$12,500 for the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project (RGHRP) to continue work with landowners and local, state, and federal entities to improve the condition and function of the Rio Grande. These funds will support the RGHRP's annual operating budget, allowing us to obtain match from other funds, expand the reach and depth of our programs, and maintain our staff capacity and grow our efforts throughout the Basin. In 2021, the RGHRP plans to work basin-wide to implement the recommendations of the Rio Grande, Conejos River, and Saguache Creek Stream Management Plans in 2020. Potential projects include irrigation infrastructure improvements, streambank stabilization and riparian restoration, and watershed health efforts.

7. Amount of funding requested for proposed project from the RGWCD: \$12,500

8. Total estimated cost of proposed project: January 2021 – December 2021

9. Cost share partners (if applicable) and amounts of funds to be contributed by each:

The requested funds will support the operating budget of the RGHRP. Additional operating support comes from the SLV Water Conservancy District, Conejos Water Conservancy District, individual donors, and a mix of grant funding.

10. Need for 404 permit required (attached authority) Yes No Covered by Nationwide

11. Approval by District: Amount \$12,500⁰⁰ Date 12-8-2020

12. RGWCD General Manager: Approved *[Signature]* Disapproved

13. Date Project Completed: _____

14. Documentation Completed Date: _____

Board approved as part of 2021 budget



Rio Grande Water Conservation District

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Phone: (719) 589-6301 • Fax: (719) 992-2026

Protecting & Conserving San Luis Valley Water

REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1. Name of Project: **The Comprehensive Willow Creek Watershed Planning Project, and Beyond - 2021**
2. Responsible party or entity: **Headwaters Alliance, Creede Colorado**
3. Contact information: **Heather Greenwolf, Executive Director**
PO Box 518, Creede CO 81130
executivedirector@headwatersalliance.org
719-588-2417
4. Date of request: **10/19/2020**
5. Location of Project. **Willow Creek Watershed, Mineral County, Data for Creede, CO**
1/4 Section **NESE Grid G8** Township **42N** Range **1W** NMPM _____
GPS Coordinates **13N Easting 330539 Northing 419059**
6. Detailed Description of Proposed Project: Photos attached Yes **XXX** No _____

Headwaters Alliance (HWA) respectfully asks for vital ongoing support from RGWCD to enable the continued work in the Willow Creek Watershed and the Upper Rio Grande Watershed via the Comprehensive Willow Creek Watershed Plan and more.

The Comprehensive Willow Creek Watershed Planning Project is a multi-year, multi-partner project that was initiated in 2020 with generous fiscal support from Colorado Water Conservation Board, Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund, City of Creede, Mineral County, Trout Unlimited and Rio Grande Water Conservation Board (thank you for that!). The objective of the Comprehensive Willow Creek Watershed Planning Project (Watershed Plan) is to effectively collaborate with partners and stakeholders to establish a *Willow Creek Watershed Plan* that meets established criteria, as well as to facilitate the implementation of cohesive and integrated projects that lead to improved water quality, stable riparian zone, ecologically functioning floodplain, healthy fisheries, flood mitigation and thoughtful recreational design in the face of climate uncertainty and the very real and pressing need to improve water quality and maintain water supply.

Headwaters Alliance is seeking RGWCD funds to support the following in 2021:

1. **2021 Comprehensive Willow Creek Watershed Planning Project focus includes:**
 - a. *High-level analysis and modeling of the newly completed, integrated Willow Creek Watershed Database.* The database (estimated completion date December 2020) will include 20 plus years of surface and ground water, and soil quality data collected by the eminent Willow Creek Reclamation Committee, EPA, CDPHE, USGS, DRMS and others into a single integrated database. The analysis work will be completed by a diverse team of experts, led by Dr. Kathy James, PhD, Environmental Health, CU Anschutz Medical Campus. It is worth noting that this level of analysis has never been done before on this data set.

- b. *Stream gage on the main-stem of Willow Creek*, below the Nelson/Commodore Waste Rock Superfund Site and above Windy Gulch. We are working to update and make the old USGS stream gage on Willow Creek operational. This gage will provide key info to inform our community's commitment to see a final remedy for water treatment at the Nelson Site, to aid in emergency response in the North Creede reach during high water events and quantify water contributions to the Rio Grande from Willow Creek and more.
- c. *Ongoing water quality sampling of Willow Creek*. HWA is currently sampling 4 sites on Willow Creek, ranging from the most upper watershed to the Rio Grande, as well as 4 sites on the Rio Grande from above Willow Creek to LaGarita Bridge. While all sites are being tested through CPW's River Watch program, four sites will be tested via split sampling procedures with ACZ Labs to ensure rigor and validity, as well to inform the current Temporary Modification for RG4A with the Colorado Water Quality Control Division. We have also initiated macro-invertebrate sampling to further inform the possibility of optimal sites for fisheries within the watershed, for water quality attenuation downstream of Nelson Site and an eventual remedy for water quality.
- d. *Release Request for Proposal for Stream Stability and Flood Control of North Creede reach of Willow Creek* (from flume to confluence of East and West Willow Creeks). This reach is especially vulnerable to upstream impacts, conveyance of large material and sediment with no bank stability or vegetation. Environmental design will seek to bring much needed engineering to mitigating the impacts from these risks. The cost for the design itself has been entirely funded by CWCB and City of Creede, RGWCD funds will support HWA administrative efforts of facilitating expert work groups to create a thoroughly vetted and comprehensive RFP. Additionally, HWA has already successfully worked with CWCB and City of Creede to submit paperwork to FEMA to certify the levee. This work will also inform the in-process, new Rio Grande floodplain mapping being completed by Wood PLC.
- e. *Ongoing leadership by HWA and community facilitation in regards to the Nelson/Commodore Waste Rock Superfund Site*. Yes, this is long-standing work. Our involvement – both within Mineral County and downstream – will be required until there is a final remedy for water quality treatment to reduce the high levels of contaminants entering Willow Creek and the Rio Grande. We have worked hard in the past year to establish a stronger working relationship with our EPA Project Team. We will continue to host community meetings, ask challenging questions and seek creative yet practical solutions that serve our community and the River itself. This is particularly relevant as the EPA has recently opened two public comment periods in reference to potential funding for work and a focused feasibility study for a flow-through bulkhead (all links below with photos.)

2. **New Projects informed and inspired by the Comprehensive Willow Creek Watershed Planning Project.** A key component of thinking comprehensively has been asking how does our work support the very real and pressing goals for water quantity and water quality for the Upper Rio Grande and the San Luis Valley, both within Willow Creek Watershed and for the pristine Rio Grande as it flows through Mineral County. As such we will be addressing the following two projects in 2021:

- a. *Upper Rio Grande Tributary Stream Gage Project*, a new project to be included within the updated *Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan*. The goal of this project is to increase the understanding of the water contribution of key tributaries in Mineral County into the Rio Grande by collecting stream flow data from the many tributaries, especially during snow melt and other high-water events, in the Upper Rio Grande Watershed - to include both the main-stem and South Fork of Rio Grande. This project will both supplement and draw guidance from the 2015 Upper Rio Grande Basin Snowfall Measurement and Streamflow (RIO-SNOW-FLOW) Forecasting Improvement Project, prepared for Colorado Water Conservation Board and Conejos Conservancy District. We are currently working with a team of experts to better refine the scope of this project, to be implemented in Spring 2021.

- b. *Mineral County consumptive and non-consumptive water use assessment, a new project to be considered for inclusion within the updated Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan.* The intent of this project is to better quantify water use and inform future land and water development practices in the Mineral County. Building on existing reference resources, i.e. CWCB's 2019 Technical Update to the Water Plan, Rio Grande Stream Management Plan, etc., we will seek further project funding to better quantify and understand water quantity and use within Mineral County as central to supporting the goals of the Rio Grande Basin, the RGWCD, land and water use planning in Mineral County and our collective grandchildren's future.

Funding from RGWCD enables us to achieve the above by:

- a. *Operationalizing project implementation.* Indeed, what HWA needs most, what we suspect many of the small-yet-mighty non-profits doing important work in the SLV need most, are funds to support administrative efforts and general operations. We are in the fortunate position that while nearly 90% of above mentioned project-specific costs have been provided for by CWCB and others, HWA remains vulnerable to maintaining our basic operational expenses. As an organization – both as HWA and as our legacy predecessor Willow Creek Reclamation Committee - we have always worked hard to keep organizational expenses as low as possible. Funds from RGWCD ensures that our local staff of one plus a(n exceptional) AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer can achieve this long list of measurable; which is only 28% of our total 2021 projected budget. Sincerely and simply, funds from RGWCD make it work.
- b. *The community value of the RGWCD funds.* Last year's support from RGWCD served as *the* seed money that provided the first-money-in to meet the requisite match funds necessary for CWCB. And in doing so, affirmed the value of the project; and increased contribution by both the City of Creede and Mineral County in supporting a comprehensive approach to addressing the many tangled complexities of Willow Creek.
- c. *The leverage value of RGWCD funds.* HWA sincerely thanks RGWCD for funds received in 2020. As noted above, these funds leveraged a dollar to dollar to match from CWCB, so RGWCD's contribution of \$20K realized \$40K worth of funding for vital work within Mineral County. Additionally, RGWCD's contribution in 2020 funds elevated contributions from other entities. We will again be utilizing RGWCD's contribution to match for other funds. This is hugely significant to an organization of our size in a rural community of our size where every single dollar means survival.

Investment in Mineral County as a vitally critical ecological region and civic community in the long-term health of the Rio Grande. While Mineral County may not be the biggest water-user within the Rio Grande system, our beloved San Juan Mountains attract, collect and hold the snow that feeds the Upper Rio Grande. HWA, as the legacy organization of the Willow Creek Reclamation Committee, is the sole organization within Mineral County attending to this work or way of thinking. With this said, we acknowledge that the needs of the Upper Rio Grande in Colorado are pressing and real given the current drought conditions and threats of climate variation and unpredictability. We sincerely seek to be partners with RGWCD, to do our part in due diligence to understand environmental water quantity and quality within the county, to conserve wherever possible, to improve water quality, to create a sustainable future for our grandchildren.

Willow Creek Watershed Partners and Funders:

The following partners have given full support to this project and funds to support the stated goals.

Headwaters Alliance	Trout Unlimited	CPW
City of Creede	Private Land Owners	EPA
Mineral County	Rio Grande Water Conservation District	USFS
Lower Willow Creek Restoration Company	Rio Grande Basin Roundtable	CDPHE
Colorado Water Conservation Board	Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust	
Colorado Watershed Assembly	University of Colorado Medical School	

And most importantly our friends and neighbors both within Creede and Mineral County and downstream – that includes you RGWCD, and most especially the members of our legacy organization Willow Creek Reclamation Committee.

- 7. Amount of funding requested for proposed project from the RGWCD: **\$20,000**
- 8. Total estimated cost of proposed project: **\$261,200**
- 9. Cost share partners (if applicable) and amounts of funds to be contributed by each: *(See below)*

Please note the below partners & amounts reflect known contributions for work to be done in 2021 only.

Funder	Cash Match	Purpose	Secured
Trout Unlimited	\$12,000	Environmental Expertise to increase rigor of outcomes in all domains.	Yes - In-Kind. Match value utilized in 2021
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation	\$31,800	Revegetation w/ volunteers on lower Willow Creek floodplain. This project was moved to 2021 due to Covid-19.	Yes. These funds were moved to 2021 due to Covid-19.
City of Creede	\$8,200	To support HWA Gen Ops	Provisional yes
Mineral County	\$10,000	Project Funds, \$8.5K in-kind	Provisional yes
River Watch	\$7,200	Water Quality Sampling	Yes. In Kind
Rio Grande Silver	\$5,400	Office rental	Yes. In Kind
CU Medical School	\$10,000	Water Quality Database modeling and analysis.	Yes
Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund	4,000	Final Phase for completing Willow Creek Inventory project	Yes
CWCB	\$158,000	Primarily supports project costs of the Comprehensive Willow Creek Watershed Plan	Yes

- 10. Need for 404 permits required (attached authority) Yes No Covered by Nationwide
- 11. Approval by District: Amount \$20,000⁰⁰ Date 12-9-2020
- 12. RGWCD General Manager: Approved *[Signature]* Disapproved
- 13. Date Project Completed: _____
- 14. Documentation Completed Date: _____

Board approved as part of 2021 budget

Photos:

Amethyst 5 Grizzly: From pictures alone this could seem like an insignificant need, however the grizzly at the Amethyst 5 Mine portal is designed to prevent the existing large volume of upstream debris from passing downstream, wrecking havoc on stabilized waste rock piles in the narrow canyon just downstream and further flooding and water quality issues that would arise further downstream.



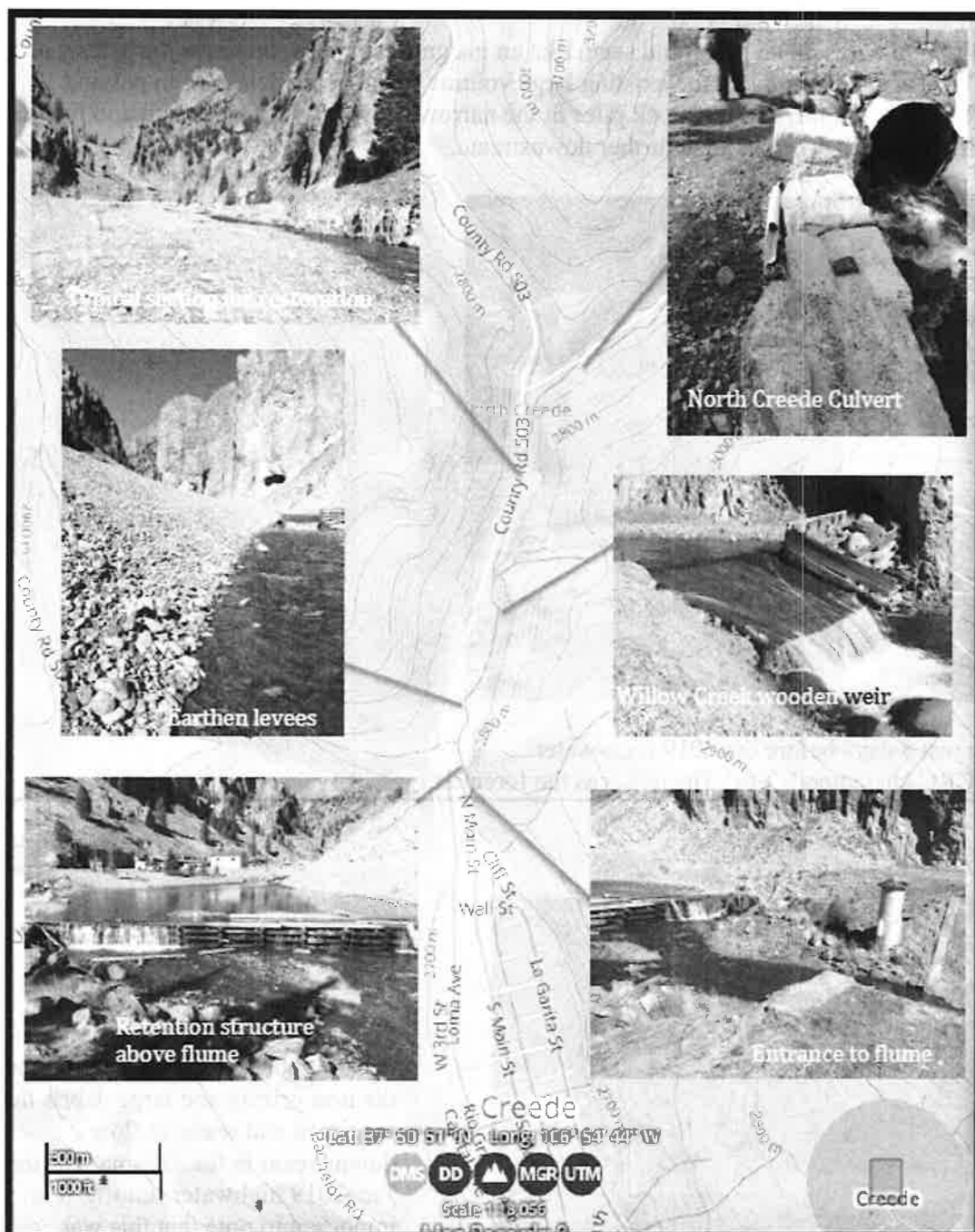
Clearing out the grizzly just 5 days before the 2019 high-water with these awesome WCRC characters! Yes! The dog was the foreman.



Grizzly after 2019 High-Water Event

Please note the destruction of the decking board, the total destruction of the iron grizzly and large debris that is primed and ready to flow downstream in the aftermath of the June 2019 highwater runoff. It is important to note that this was estimated as a 660cfs event by renowned paleo-hydrologist Dr. Bob Jarrett, or a 6 year event.

North Creede Project Elements and Locations



North Creede Reach. This is a complex ½ mile. While austere beautiful in its barrenness wrought from legacy mining impacts, this reach will benefit will from the expert engineering eye that brings stream stability, vegetation, reduces and /or mitigates the downstream conveyance of large material and reinforces antiquated structures last tended in the 1950's.



Water Quality Sampling. This is a key activity that requires rigor in process to maintain validity and fortunately, a favorite for volunteer participation.



Lower Willow Creek Floodplain Design: While no RGWCD funds have been used to obtain a new design for the Lower Willow Creek Floodplain, we want to share that 12 organizations attended the pre-bid site tour and we are expecting at least 5 – 6 bids, due October 22, 2020. What makes this process different from the first attempt is (1) that we are seeking a design for the entire reach – flume to Rio Grande, across property lines, with the support of all 5 property owners; (2) design criteria prioritizes ecological function first and foremost; (3) we have solicited bids from diverse, top-tier environmentally solid companies across the Western region. We will be reviewing applicants in late October for selection in November 2020.

Implementation of final design will have beneficial impacts to the Rio Grande.

Links to current EPA Public Comment Actions

- 1. Focused Feasibility Study (FFS) for Flow-through Bulkhead.** Link here: <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/SiteProfiles/index.cfm?fuseaction=second.scs&id=0802630&doc=Y&colid=34605®ion=08&type=SC>
- 2. Public Comment Period details on above FFS.** Link here: <https://semspub.epa.gov/work/08/100008616.pdf>
- 3. The Amended Decree - US V Pioneer.** Link here: <https://www.justice.gov/enrd/consent-decrees>
- 4. For the complete Nelson Site:** www.epa.gov/superfund/nelson-tunnel



Rio Grande Water Conservation District

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Protecting & Conserving San Luis Valley Water

REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

This form is provided to allow a request for funding and a detailed explanation of a proposed project request for funding which conserves and protects the water resources of the Rio Grande Basin exclusive of Costilla County and structures associated with water courses within.

1. Name of Project: _____ **Colorado Dust-on-Snow Program (CODOS)** _____
2. Responsible party or entity: _____ **Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies (CSAS)** _____
3. Contact information: **_ Jeff Derry, PO Box 190, Silverton, CO 81433. Office: (970) 387-5080 _ Cell: (970) 231-6595** _____
4. Date of request: **_ August 11, 2020. I intend to attend the RGWCD quarterly meeting on October 20, 2020 to present and formally request continued funding from RGWCD** _____
5. Location of Project (Legal Description)
_____ 1/4 _____ 1/4 Section _____ Township _____ Range _____ NMPM _____
GPS Coordinates Easting _____ Northing _____
6. Detailed Description of Proposed Project: Photos attached Yes _____ No _____

CODOS is an applied science monitoring and research program designed to assist the Colorado water management community in coping with the impacts of dust-on-snow on snowmelt behaviors. CODOS monitors and samples dust-on-snow events in the San Juan Mountains and in most major Colorado headwaters. CODOS publishes a series of Update and Alert products describing current and evolving conditions throughout the winter and spring of each season. Using a “Dust Enhanced Runoff Classification” (DERC) methodology, CODOS associates those evolving snowpack, dust, and spring precipitation conditions with past-year hydrographs, by watershed, to identify plausible patterns in the current year’s snowmelt runoff hydrographs.

7. Amount of funding requested for proposed project from the RGWCD: \$5,000

8. Total estimated cost of proposed project: 116,500

9. Cost share partners (if applicable) and amounts of funds to be contributed by each:

 Please see CODOS Funding Request

Cost share partners include: CRWCD, DWCD, SWWCD, TCWCD, Denver Water, Bureau of Reclamation, CWCB, GMUG National Forest, and City of Grand Junction

10. Need for 404 permit required (attached authority) Yes No X Covered by Nationwide

11. Approval by District: Amount \$ 5,000 Date 12-9-2020

12. RGWCD General Manager: Approved Disapproved

13. Date Project Completed:

14. Documentation Completed Date:

Board approval as part of 2021 budget