

Colorado's Water Plan Grants

GUIDELINES

Introduction

Governor John Hickenlooper directed the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) in 2013 to create a policy document reflecting Colorado's water values – incorporating a productive economy, efficient and effective water infrastructure, and a strong environment. Colorado's Water Plan (CWP) identified a number of actions, goals, and measurable objectives that will help promote those values for generations to come. In 2017, the General Assembly made grant funds available for CWCB to help implement the Critical Action Plan set forth in the Water Plan (HB 17-1248).

The Water Plan Grant funding is available to promote progress on the critical actions identified in the Water Plan and its measurable objectives. The Board will fund the projects, programs and activities that have the best opportunity to make progress on the Water Plan's objectives. All applications will be assessed based on funds available for a particular Water Plan Implementation category. See CWCB's website for Water Plan Grant category balances.

In order to help ensure opportunities for applicants to seek funding in an orderly fashion and at the same time to encourage competitive access to the funding, applications will be evaluated based on the eligibility requirements and evaluation criteria outlined in this document. After thorough evaluation, CWCB staff will recommend projects to the CWCB Board for approval of grant funding during regularly scheduled Board meetings. CWCB staff reserves the right to negotiate with applicants to modify the scope and budget of their project to better meet the Water Plan objectives.

The CWCB understands that some water projects and processes require a longer lead time in order to develop a comprehensive Water Plan Grant application. Applicants may choose to notify the Board of their interest in applying for a Water Plan Grant at a future date by checking the 'Intent to Apply' box on the Grant Application. This will allow the Board to consider the need for potential future funding.

Water Plan Funding Categories* include:

- Supply and Demand Gap Projects - Multi-beneficial projects and those projects identified in basin implementation plans to address the water supply and demand gap;
- Water Storage Projects - Projects that facilitate the development of additional storage, artificial recharge into aquifers, and dredging existing reservoirs to restore the reservoirs' full decreed storage capacity;
- Conservation & Land Use Projects - Activities that implement long-term strategies for conservation, land use, and drought planning;
- Engagement & Innovation Activities - Activities that support water education, outreach, and innovation efforts
- Agricultural Projects - Projects that provide technical assistance or improve agricultural efficiency; and
- Environmental & Recreation Projects - Projects that promote watershed health, environmental health, and recreation.

* Applications may qualify for more than one category of funding.

Eligible Applicants include:

- Governmental entities - municipalities, districts, enterprises, counties, and State of Colorado agencies. Federal agencies are encouraged to work with local entities. Covered Entities as

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defined in Section 37-60-126, C.R.S., are eligible if the applicant has adopted an approved water conservation plan.

- Private entities - mutual ditch companies, consulting firms, non-profit corporations, and partnerships.

Level of Funding Request:

- The CWCB will attempt to distribute the grant funds in a fair and equitable fashion. No application should exceed 50% of total the category funding available, as identified in the 2017 CWCB Projects Bill (HB 17-1248) Water Plan Grant category. The amounts are available on the CWCB web site (www.cwcb.state.co.us) under Loans and Grants. Applicants should be aware that many variables will impact funding levels, including overall funding demand.

Examples of eligible projects and activities

- Technical assistance regarding permitting, feasibility studies, and environmental compliance.
- Studies or analysis of structural; programmatic; consumptive; and non-consumptive water projects or activities.
- Design of structural projects or activities.
- Activities that promote education, outreach and innovation consistent with the mission and goals of the CWP.

Matching Fund Requirements

Water Plan Grant requests require matching funds. The match may be provided by the applicant or a third party and may consist of any combination of cash or loan funds. In-kind services such as an organization's operational costs and volunteer services will not be considered as matching funds. Any matching contributions not provided by the applicant must be accompanied by a letter of commitment, or a letter of pending commitment from the contributing entity.

Type of Activity	As a Percent of Project Cost		
	Recommended Grant Funding Request ⁽¹⁾	Max ⁽²⁾ Grant Funding Request (inc. WSRF)	Match Required Non-CWCB Sources ⁽³⁾
Engineering & Construction ⁽⁴⁾	20%	50%	50%
Feasibility Study	50%	50%	50%
Reducing Agricultural Dry Up	50%	80%	20%
Conservation/Efficiency Methods	50%	80%	20%
Educational Efforts	50%	80%	20%
Environmental Conservation	50%	80%	20%
Watershed Improvements	50%	80%	20%
Stream Improvements	50%	80%	20%
Land Use Planning	20%	50%	50%
Recreational Projects	20%	80%	20%

(1) Applicants requesting grant funding at this level or below will receive a higher consideration

(2) Maximum grant limits are reserved for Projects deemed to provide a value to all Coloradans or include multiple beneficiaries. Projects that reduce the water supply-demand gap identified in the Water Plan are a high priority.

(3) The CWCB manages several programs and grant funds, including the WSRF. Leveraging funds from

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sources outside of the Department of Natural Resources is important.

(4) Requires feasibility study and engineer's opinion of probable cost

Non-CWCB matching funds include state agencies such as Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) funding, and other state agencies and federal agencies. All funding sources within the control of the CWCB Board and its Director are considered CWCB funds, including the Water Supply Reserve Fund (WSRF).

Waivers: The CWCB may waive the match requirement if it is in the best interest of the State of Colorado or the applicant demonstrates that the matching requirement imposes a significant financial hardship on the applicant.

Evaluation Criteria

The proposed water project shall be evaluated using a similar approach to the WSRF Criteria and Guidelines and the criteria for state support in Colorado's Water Plan. In general, the proposal will be evaluated on how well it conforms to the Framework for State of Colorado Support for a Water Projects set forth in Colorado's Water Plan (Section 9.4, pp. 9-43 to 9-44:), and how well the proposed water project meets the Goals and Measurable Outcomes of its respective Basin Implementation Plan.

Application Process

Application forms are available on the CWCB website:

cwcb.state.co.us (Look for Grants and Loans)

Applicants should include at a minimum the following documents:

- Completed Application
- Statement of Work
- Budget (Excel and pdf format)
- Schedule
- Maps (if applicable)
- Letters of Commitment (matching funds)
- Photos
- Drawings
- Letter of Support from the Basin Roundtable is encouraged

Financial Documents Required for Contract Execution

- Certificate of Liability
- Certificate of Good Standing

The CWCB's review and approval process will include the following steps:

- CWCB staff will determine if the required documentation has been submitted. The application will be accepted once all documentation has been received.
- CWCB staff will evaluate the application based on the criteria described in this document and notify the CWCB Board member representing the basin involved.
- For the first round of grant awards there will be a two Board meeting process:
 - At the September Board meeting, staff will present the applications to the Board, provide an opportunity for public comment, and ask for the Board's feedback.
 - At the November Board meeting, CWCB staff will make a recommendation to the Board for full funding, partial funding, or for denial of funding.

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- CWCB staff will notify the applicant of the staff's recommendation and of the date and time when the Board will consider the application. While CWCB staff has primary responsibility for presenting the recommendation to the Board, the applicant may need to attend the meeting to address the Board and may offer comments during the opportunity for public comment.
- Upon Board approval of the applicant's request, funding will be available after a contract is executed.

CWP Grant Review and Approval Schedule

Application Due	Staff Review	Board Meeting (Consideration)	Board Meeting (Approval)	Notice of Approval/Denial	Grant Contracting (Estimate)	Notice to Proceed "work may begin" (Estimate)
August 1, 2017	30 days	Sept. 20/21	Nov. 15/16	Dec. 1	45 days	Jan. 15, 2018
October 1, 2017	30 days	Nov. 15/16	Jan. 22/23	Feb. 1	45 days	Mar. 15, 2018
February 1, 2018	30 days	Mar. 21/22	May 23/24	June 1	45 days	July 15, 2018
August 1, 2018	30 days	Sept. 19/20	Nov. 14/15	Dec. 1	45 days	Jan. 15, 2019
February 1, 2019	30 days	March	May	June 1	45 days	July 15, 2019

Grant Administration

Contracting:

After approval or conditional approval of funding by the Board, CWCB staff will direct the applicant to revise and supplement submitted documents if required for issuance of a purchase order or execution of a contract. Grants less than \$100,000 will be implemented by use of a purchase order. Grants for \$100,000 or more will require execution of a contract.

Successful applicants are expected to execute a contract with CWCB within 6 months of award. If a grant contract is not executed within this timeframe, CWCB staff may return the funds back to the appropriate funding category if adequate progress is not made.

Reporting Requirements

Progress Reports: The applicant shall provide the CWCB a progress report every 6 months, beginning from the date of issuance of a purchase order, or the execution of a contract. The progress report shall describe the status of the tasks identified in the statement of work, including a description of any major issues that have occurred and any corrective action taken to address these issues. The CWCB may withhold reimbursement until satisfactory progress reports have been submitted.

Final Report: At completion of the project, the applicant shall provide the CWCB a Final Report on the applicant's letterhead that:

- Summarizes the project and how the project was completed.
- Describes any obstacles encountered, and how these obstacles were overcome.
- Confirms that all matching commitments have been fulfilled.

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- Includes photographs, summaries of meetings and engineering reports/designs.

The CWCB will withhold disbursement the last 10% of the budget until the Final Report is completed to the satisfaction of CWCB staff. Once the Final Report has been accepted, and final payment has been issued, the purchase order or grant will be closed without any further payment.

Payments: Payment will be based on actual expenditures invoiced by the grantee. The request for payment must be transmitted on the grantee's letterhead, and shall include:

- Date of request
- Grantee's contact name, email address, physical address, and phone number
- Date of CWCB grant approval
- Contract or purchase order number
- Description of the work accomplished by major task as presented in the approved budget
- Supporting documentation for items or services billed
- Estimate of the percent completion for individual tasks and the entire water activity in relation to the percentage of budget spent
- Identification of any major issues, and proposed or implemented corrective actions

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Supply and Demand Gap Project Grants

The CWP sets a measurable objective of reducing the projected 2050 municipal and industrial gap from as much as 560,000 acre-feet to zero acre-feet by 2030.

Potential Project Types:

Feasibility Studies, Engineering Design and Permitting, Projects and Processes that result in a shared benefit to multiple stakeholder interests with an emphasis on non-consumptive water uses.

Criteria and considerations:

- Completed Feasibility Studies must be submitted with an engineer's estimate of probable cost for grant requests that include costs for final engineering plans and construction.
- Does the project/applicant demonstrate a commitment to collaboration? Does the project/applicant: address more than one type of need; involve multiple participants where appropriate; consult with a broad set of local stakeholders and local governments; provide meaningful opportunities for input?
- Does the project address an identified water gap? Is the project: included in a BIP; identified as meeting a defined need in a basin needs assessment; identified as meeting a defined need identified in the SWSI; or identified as part of the no-and low-regrets scenario planning process?
- Does the project/applicant demonstrate sustainability? Does the project/applicant: adopt an integrated plan or plans geared toward implementing conservation? avoid adverse effects to environmental and recreational interests; adopt environmental, watershed health, and recreational mitigation in the planning phase of the project; avoid impacts to, mitigate, or enhance water quality, mitigate or avoid economic and social impacts on agricultural and rural communities; maximize the use of water resources, improving or modernizing aging infrastructure, or aquifer storage and recharge project; conflict with any interstate compact or the curtailment of existing water rights?
- Does the project/applicant establish the fiscal and technical feasibility of the project? Does the project/applicant demonstrate: overall cost-effectiveness; local investment or contribution; financial capability to repay debt; an intent to leverage other funding; technical and legal availability of water supplies for the project; or readiness to proceed upon receipt of necessary funding and permits (i.e. completed preliminary planning and design work, obtained necessary water rights, secured necessary financial commitments)?

Matching recommendation:

Applicant is encouraged to provide a minimum of 50% non-CWCB grant matching funds (a CWCB loan is considered the applicant's matching funds). Grant requests for greater 50% of project costs will receive lower preference during application review.

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Water Storage Project Grants

The CWP sets a measurable objective of attaining 400,000 acre-feet of water storage in order to manage and share conserved water and the yield of Identified Projects and Processes (IPPs) by 2050.

Potential Project Types:

Feasibility Studies, Engineering Design and Permitting, Projects and Processes that result in the storage of additional water.

Criteria and considerations:

- Storage projects that are regional in nature that result in a shared benefit to multiple stakeholders including the State of Colorado for compact administration and non-consumptive water uses will receive preference.
- Completed Feasibility Studies must be submitted with an engineer's estimate of probable cost for grant requests that include costs for final engineering plans and construction.
- Does the project/applicant demonstrate a commitment to collaboration? Does the project/applicant: address more than one type of need; involve multiple participants where appropriate; consult with a broad set of local stakeholders and local governments; provide meaningful opportunities for input?
- Does the project address an identified water gap? Is the project: included in a BIP; identified as meeting a defined need in a basin needs assessment; identified as meeting a defined need identified in the SWSI; or identified as part of the no-and low-regrets scenario planning process?
- Does the project/applicant demonstrate sustainability? Does the project/applicant: adopt an integrated plan or plans geared toward implementing conservation? avoid adverse effects to environmental and recreational interests; adopt environmental, watershed health, and recreational mitigation in the planning phase of the project; avoid impacts to, mitigate, or enhance water quality, mitigate or avoid economic and social impacts on agricultural and rural communities; maximize the use of water resources, improving or modernizing aging infrastructure, or aquifer storage and recharge project; conflict with any interstate compact or the curtailment of existing water rights?
- Does the project/applicant establish the fiscal and technical feasibility of the project? Does the project/applicant demonstrate: overall cost-effectiveness; local investment or contribution; financial capability to repay debt; an intent to leverage other funding; technical and legal availability of water supplies for the project; or readiness to proceed upon receipt of necessary funding and permits (i.e. completed preliminary planning and design work, obtained necessary water rights, secured necessary financial commitments)?

Matching recommendation:

Applicant is encouraged to provide a minimum of 50% non-CWCB grant matching funds (a CWCB loan is considered the applicant's matching funds). Grant requests for greater 50% of project costs will receive lower preference during application review.

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Conservation & Land Use Project Grants

The CWP sets a measurable objective to achieve 400,000 acre-feet of municipal and industrial water conservation by 2050. In addition, the CWP sets a measurable objective that by 2025, 75 percent of Coloradans will live in communities that have incorporated water-saving actions into land-use planning.

Potential Project Types:

Water conservation (examples: water meter replacements, projects to reduce system water loss), water reuse, integration of water and land use planning (example: technical assistance to put water conservation elements into comprehensive land use plans), state agency conservation

Criteria and considerations:

- Does the project reduce overall future water needs through cost-effective water efficiency measures?
- Does the project integrate water efficiency planning and projects into overall water resource management?
- Does the project promote a water efficiency ethic throughout Colorado?
- Does the project explore additional water reuse options?
- Does the project integrate land use and water planning?
- Does the project advance conservation planning efforts?
- Does the project advance drought mitigation planning efforts?
- Does the project reduce impacts and prepare for the impacts of climate change?

Matching recommendation:

Applicant is encouraged to provide a minimum of 50% non-CWCB grant matching funds (a CWCB loan can be used for applicant's matching funds). Grant requests for greater than 50% of project costs will receive lower preference during review.

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Engagement & Innovation Activities

The CWP sets a measurable objective to significantly improve the level of public awareness and engagement regarding water issues statewide by 2020, as determined by water awareness surveys. The CWP also sets a measurable objective to engage Coloradans statewide on at least five key water challenges (identified by CWCB) that should be addressed by 2030.

For Engagement & Innovation grant requests, please fill out the Supplemental Application as well as the main application (download the word version on the website).

Potential Project Types: Engagement (Communication, Outreach, Education) and Innovation

Criteria and considerations:

- Overall
 - Is the project collaborative? Does it engage a diverse group of stakeholders? Does it involve and engage the community?
 - Does the project establish fiscal feasibility? Does the project demonstrate overall cost-effectiveness and leverage other funding?
 - Does the project contain a plan to measure and evaluate its success and impact?
 - Is the project supported by research, evidence, and data? Does it apply best practices?
 - Does the project strive to improve the level of public awareness and engagement regarding water issues?
- Engagement
 - Does the project enhance Colorado's water communication, outreach, education, and public engagement efforts by addressing one or more of the following:
 - Achieves the education, outreach, and public engagement measurable objective set forth in Colorado's Water Plan to "significantly improve the level of public awareness and engagement regarding water issues statewide by 2020, as determined by water awareness surveys?"
 - Achieves the other measurable objectives and critical goals and actions laid out in Colorado's Water Plan around the supply and demand gap; conservation; land use; agriculture; storage; watershed health, environment, and recreation; funding; and additional?
 - Achieves the education, outreach, and public engagement goals set forth in the applicable Basin Implementation Plan(s)?
 - Achieves the basin roundtable's PEPO Education Action Plans?
 - Improves the use of existing state resources, which includes supporting efforts to improve coordination between state agencies on water outreach and education activities?
- Innovation
 - Does the project enhance the water innovation ecosystem in Colorado?
 - Does the project engage Colorado's entrepreneurial/business/innovation community to help solve our state's water challenges?
 - Does the project advance a solution to a water need identified through TAP-IN and other water innovation challenges?

Matching recommendation: Applicant is encouraged to provide a minimum of 50% non-CWCB matching funds. Grant requests for greater than 50% of project costs will receive lower preference during review.

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Agricultural Projects

The CWP sets an objective that agricultural economic productivity will keep pace with growing state, national, and global needs, even if some acres go out of production. The State will work closely with the agricultural community to share at least 50,000 acre-feet of agricultural water using voluntary alternative transfer methods by 2030.

Potential Project Types:

Technical assistance for programmatic ATM development; water banking projects; agricultural efficiency programs; etc.

Criteria and considerations:

- Completed Feasibility Studies must be submitted with an engineer's estimate of probable cost for grant requests that include costs for final engineering plans and construction.
- Does the project/applicant demonstrate a commitment to collaboration? Does the project/applicant: address more than one type of need; involve multiple participants where appropriate; consult with a broad set of local stakeholders and local governments; provide meaningful opportunities for input?
- Does the project address an identified water gap? Is the project: included in a BIP; identified as meeting a defined need in a basin needs assessment; identified as meeting a defined need identified in the SWSI; or identified as part of the no-and low-regrets scenario planning process?
- Does the project/applicant demonstrate sustainability? Does the project/applicant: adopt an integrated plan or plans geared toward implementing conservation? avoid adverse effects to environmental and recreational interests; adopt environmental, watershed health, and recreational mitigation in the planning phase of the project; avoid impacts to, mitigate, or enhance water quality, mitigate or avoid economic and social impacts on agricultural and rural communities; maximize the use of water resources, improving or modernizing aging infrastructure, or aquifer storage and recharge project; conflict with any interstate compact or the curtailment of existing water rights?
- Does the project/applicant establish the fiscal and technical feasibility of the project? Does the project/applicant demonstrate: overall cost-effectiveness; local investment or contribution; financial capability to repay debt; an intent to leverage other funding; technical and legal availability of water supplies for the project; or readiness to proceed upon receipt of necessary funding and permits (i.e. completed preliminary planning and design work, obtained necessary water rights, secured necessary financial commitments)?

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Environmental & Recreation Projects

The CWP states "environment and recreation are too critical to Colorado's brand not to have robust objectives; a strong Colorado environment is critical to the economy and way of life." We must address a variety of concerns, including pre- and post-fire mitigation, forest mortality, water quality impairments, potential impacts of legacy mines, flood mitigation and recovery, aquatic and riparian habitat enhancement, and land use change.

Potential Project Types:

- Recreational in-channel diversions and other projects that provide or improve boating opportunities
- Removal of invasive phreatophytes
- Projects that support water-related recreational activities, such as boating, fishing, waterfowl hunting, and wildlife watching
- Projects that promote restoration, recovery, and sustainability of endangered, threatened, and imperiled aquatic and riparian-dependent species and plant communities
- Stream restoration and riparian habitat improvement projects
- Assistance to BRTs in using SWSI Update information and tools to identify and prioritize locally important streams and critical watersheds
- Implementation of recommendations developed in stream management plans or watershed plans
- Extended stakeholder process to facilitate implementation of stream management plan recommendations or watershed plan recommendations
 - Structural solutions (e.g., diversion structure with fish passage)
 - Flow-related projects (e.g., split-season use of water - irrigation and instream flow use)
 - Additional data collection if found necessary in stream management plan or watershed plan
 - Watershed health regional efforts
 - Flood mitigation projects
 - Fire prevention and mitigation projects

Criteria and considerations:

- Does the project/applicant demonstrate a commitment to collaboration? Does the project/applicant: address more than one type of need; involve multiple participants where appropriate; consult with a broad set of local stakeholders and local governments; provide meaningful opportunities for input?
- Does the project/applicant establish the fiscal and technical feasibility of the project? Does the project/applicant demonstrate: overall cost-effectiveness; local investment or contribution; an intent to leverage other funding; or readiness to proceed upon receipt of necessary funding and permits (i.e. completed preliminary planning and design work, obtained necessary permits, secured necessary financial commitments)?

Matching recommendation:

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