

**Colorado Water Conservation Board
Colorado Watershed Restoration Program
Grant Application – Summary Sheet**

Project Title: Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Plan

Project Location: Middle Colorado River Watershed (see map below)

Grant Type: Stream Management Plan Grant

Grant Request/Amount: \$ 207,600

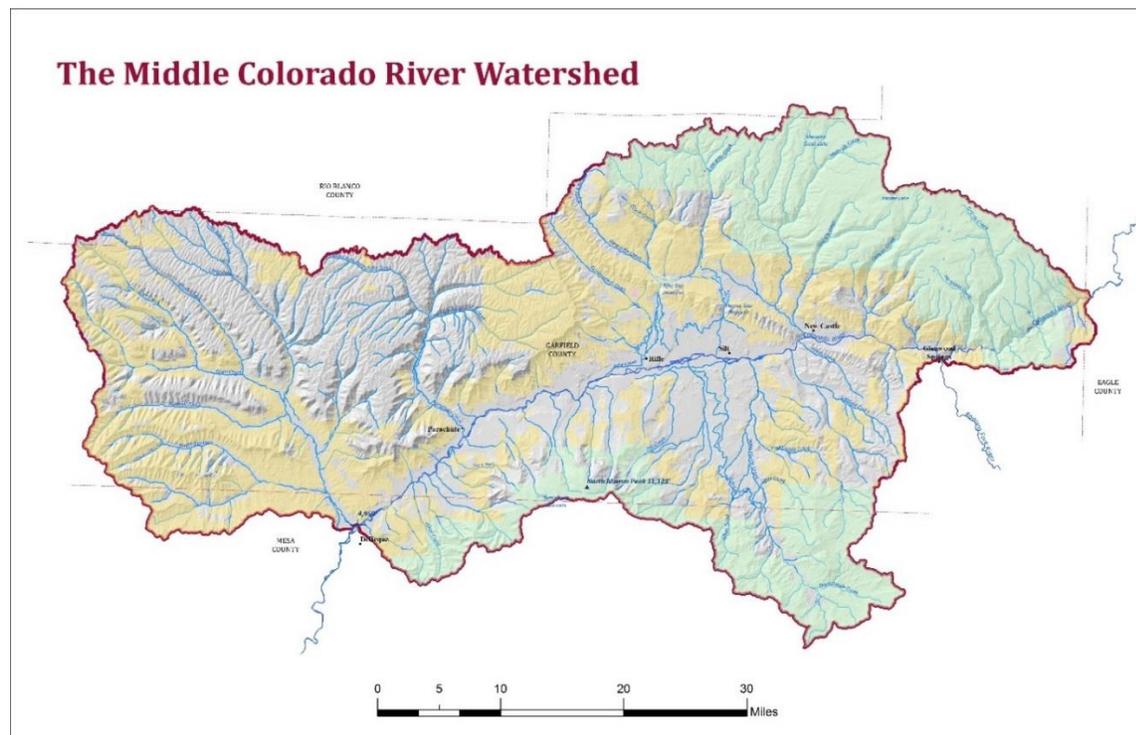
Cash Match Funding: \$ 141,400

In-kind Match Funding: \$ 66,200

Project Sponsor: Middle Colorado Watershed Council

Contact Information: Laurie Rink, Executive Director, laurie@midcowatershed.org, 303-204-4164

Project Description: The long-term goal of the IWMP project is to improve security for all water uses in the planning area by understanding and protecting existing uses, meeting shortages, and maintaining healthy riverine ecosystems in the face of increased future demand and climate uncertainty. The planning and implementation effort will be conducted in a series of phases as stakeholder interest and funding allows. The first phase initiates a process of identifying water needs for environmental and recreational uses, determining if gaps exist and, if so, finding voluntary-based solutions for filling the gaps in conjunction with the needs of agricultural, domestic and industrial water users. The geographic focus in phase one is on the “middle” section of the Colorado River, an area that includes 75 miles of the mainstem. CWCB funds will be used to conduct technical assessments, develop a hydrology model, and support a robust stakeholder engagement process that will help inform the investigation of, selection, and prioritization of projects, processes and/or management actions that further the long-term project objective. Outcomes from phase one will chart the course for a subsequent phase of planning work in a subset of tributaries to the middle Colorado, and will likely include recommendations for implementation projects on the mainstem.



Colorado Watershed Restoration Program Grant Application – Narrative

Background

The Colorado Basin Roundtable (CBRT) identified basin-wide integrated water management planning (IWMP) as a top priority in its Basin Implementation Plan (BIP). The middle Colorado River, extending from the top of Glenwood Canyon downstream to the head of De Beque Canyon, is a critical section to consider as part of the CBRT's comprehensive strategy. This 75-mile stretch of the mainstem of the Colorado River supports the six communities of Glenwood Springs, New Castle, Silt, Rifle, Parachute/Battlement Mesa, and De Beque that each rely on Colorado River water in a variety of ways (see map Attachment A). These uses include primary or secondary drinking water supply, the economics of recreational tourism (fishing, boating, hunting, biking, walking, hot springing, bird-watching), and the quality of life enjoyed having access to the river and its resources.

The tributaries to the middle Colorado River also play an important role in meeting both consumptive and non-consumptive water supply needs. Several municipalities derive their primary or secondary drinking water from the tributaries and count on these as high-quality sources. Most agricultural diversions are situated on the tributaries and are dependent on sufficient water yield for crop production. Oil and gas operations withdraw surface water for production purposes. All warm and cold water native fish species rely on the tributaries as critical spawning and/or rearing habitat, thus flows and quality habitat are vital for reproductive success. And, as our communities are undergoing economic diversification, all appear to be turning to the local stream and river corridors as prime opportunities for recreational development.

As water management in the tributary basins operates largely independent from the mainstem of the Colorado, many have lost the functional ecological connection they once provided. The IWMP process affords the opportunity to reintegrate the tributaries with the mainstem and to understand how the system functions as a whole. It also offers the opportunity for our communities and their various economic sectors to come together to identify the collective water needs necessary to continue to improve and grow our communities.

The approach contemplated in this IWMP proposal is two-fold. One, initiate work to understand the environmental and recreational flow needs associated with the mainstem of the Colorado River. Two, in a phased sequence, evaluate the tributaries and their potential for contributing to overall community and watershed health. Where opportunities for integration exist, and as community stakeholders and water right owners are willing to participate on a voluntary basis, tributary management plans will be crafted and brought into the fold of a watershed-wide IWMP.

Statement of Need

The CRBT's BIP begins with the following vision statement:

“... a Colorado River basin that is home to thriving communities benefiting from vibrant, healthy rivers and outstanding water quality that provides for all of the Colorado Basin's needs.”

As an outgrowth of this vision, six themes were developed as guiding principles for the BIP. Each of the themes are relevant to IWMP work in the middle Colorado, as described below.

Theme 1 – Ecosystem Health – Protect and Restore Streams, Rivers, Lakes and Riparian Areas.

The BIP establishes that “biologically healthy rivers form the basis of a thriving Colorado Basin.” And “this is not only reflected in stream flows but also in how those stream flows are managed.” As a first step in this direction, the CBRT initiated an “Integrated Water Management Planning Framework Project” which seeks to build a foundation for conducting comprehensive integrated water management plans in the mainstem Colorado River Basin.

Environmental issues of concern for the middle Colorado, as highlighted in the BIP, include:

- High concentrations of salinity, selenium, hardness, total dissolved solids, iron and manganese that could be exacerbated with reduced flows.
- Designation of critical habitat for two federally threatened or endangered listed fish species that extends upstream on the Colorado River mainstem from the 15-Mile Reach in Mesa County to the main Rifle I-70 Bridge and providing for their recovery needs.
- Three native fish species of concern (roundtail chub, bluehead sucker, and flannelmouth sucker) that require management actions to ensure that populations do not decline to the point requiring a T&E listing.
- Aquatic habitat degradation and the resulting need to protect water quality and riparian habitat along the Colorado River.
- Possible impacts to tourism and the recreational economy.

Additional environmental and recreational concerns and vulnerabilities for the middle Colorado were identified in the 2011 Colorado Basin Needs Assessment Report (which includes a non-consumptive needs assessment and results from application of the Watershed Flow Evaluation Tool).

Theme 2 – Agriculture – Sustain, Protect and Promote Agriculture.

According to the BIP, of the seven regions within the Colorado Basin, the middle Colorado supports the second highest number of irrigated acres at over 52,000, much of which is irrigated with water from the smaller tributaries. Water management in the middle Colorado is provided by the Silt, Bluestone, and West Divide Water Conservancy Districts and the Bureau of Reclamation Silt Project. Local water managers report irrigation water shortages for some of the tributary sub-basin, although a collective quantification of the shortfalls has not been completed. One of the specific goals identified in the BIP is to reduce agricultural water shortages. As agricultural producers are interested and willing, the IWMP process can assist in defining shortages and evaluating alternatives for meeting deficits through optimization of water management or infrastructure upgrades.

Theme 3 – Safe Drinking Water – Secure and Protect Safe Drinking Water for Today and Tomorrow.

Based upon interviews with drinking water providers, the BIP concluded that it is imperative to secure the needs of growing domestic water demands by developing in-basin supplies, expanding current raw water storage supplies and developing new small-scale multi-use storage. In the middle Colorado, a lack of redundancy in municipal supplies puts users at risk, in addition to water supply contamination risks associated with expanding energy extraction activities in the region. The IWMP affords the opportunity to coordinate with local drinking water providers in evaluating opportunities for expanded supplies, storage, and source water protection in the context of achieving benefits that could also be realized by agriculture, environmental and recreational interests.

Theme 4 – Encourage a High Level of Basinwide Conservation.

The CBRT BIP states “in order to meet the Basin and state goals, concerted conservation efforts have to be made”. While conservation and efficiency practices are currently being implemented to varying

degrees by agriculture and the local municipalities within the middle Colorado, additional opportunities for investigation can be discussed through the IWMP process with willing stakeholders.

Theme 5 – Land use – Develop Local Water Conscious Land Use Strategies.

Citing the need for making the connection between land use and water supply, the BIP strongly urges local and regional land use authorities to take on water management as an issue when planning for the future. While the IWMP does not contemplate recommending changes in regulation or policy, it can serve as a forum for exploring the nexus between land use planning and water supply in the middle Colorado and educating, through outreach to the public, the implications of land use decisions on the future of local water supply.

Theme 6 – Basin Administration – Assure Dependable Basin Administration

As articulated in the BIP, protecting the senior Shoshone Hydroelectric water right, Grand Valley irrigators' water rights (Cameo Call), and critical flows in the 15-Mile Reach are vital to both instream flows and Basin water users. While there are processes either in place or underway by a collective of water managers to secure these rights in perpetuity, the IWMP process will assist with educating the public on the importance of these rights to garner public approval for any needed short- or long-term financial investments.

Long-Term Goal, Objectives and Phasing

The long-term goal of this project is to improve security for all water uses in the middle Colorado River Watershed planning area by understanding and protecting existing uses, meeting shortages, and maintaining healthy riverine ecosystems in the face of increased future demand and climate uncertainty. The broad objectives associated with meeting the long-term goal are as follows:

1. Assess and quantify environmental and recreational flow-related needs/uses, and determine where and when those needs are unmet under current and future conditions.
2. Understand, and where needed and desired by stakeholders, assess and refine consumptive uses need quantifications, and determine where and when those needs are unmet under current and future conditions.
3. Identify projects, processes and management actions that can fill or mitigate identified needs and use gaps.
4. Implement high priority projects, processes and management actions that are consistent with the values of the communities, water users, and participating water rights owners.

Planning and implementation required to meet the long-term project goal will be conducted in a series of phases as stakeholder interest and funding allows. Planning and implementing in a phased fashion employs a learning-by-doing approach, allows for earlier and phased implementation of management recommendations, and can accommodate adaptive management principles.

The geographic focus in phase one is on the middle section of the Colorado River, an area that includes 75 miles of the mainstem. Outcomes from phase one will chart the course for a second phase of planning work in a subset of tributaries to the middle Colorado where stakeholders and water rights owners have indicated an interest and willingness to work towards meeting project goals.

It is expected that phase one will also yield recommendations for projects, processes, and management actions on the mainstem, allowing for some implementation to begin in phase two. Subsequent phases will continue in succession as described, integrating more tributary sub-basins into the planning process while implementing activities identified in previous phases.

The long-term planning effort has the potential to result in the following benefits as it evolves:

1. A better understanding of spatial and temporal flow gaps that will serve to influence water management decisions both locally and in the upstream contributing watershed.
2. An identification of who is needed and willing to work towards effecting positive change when considering how to fill consumptive and non-consumptive use need gaps.
3. A better understanding of the structural needs for providing water security for agricultural, municipal, and industrial users and a set of identified projects for future funding requests.
4. Creation of models for the middle Colorado River and its tributaries, both mechanistic and organizational, that can be used into the future to evaluate the successes of implementation activities and to inform adaptive management actions moving forward.
5. A greater public understanding around the value of water as it relates to all uses and the importance of local control and cooperation in water management planning.
6. Answering questions about riverine flows, how they relate to the long-term trajectory of riparian ecosystem health, and identifying other mechanisms and priority locations for protecting and promoting highly functioning riparian areas composed of naturally reproducing and regenerating native plant communities that support wildlife and waterfowl.
7. Understanding current water quality impairments and relationship to flow, ways to mitigate impairments to meet state standards, and flows needed to offset future impairment listings.
8. Understanding what is required by way of improvements in habitat and flow to support naturally reproducing populations of native fishes, further the recovery of threatened and endangered fish species, and avoid additional future threatened and endangered listings for natives.
9. Identifying increased opportunities for diversified river-related recreational opportunities that can boost local economies while protecting riverine ecosystem function.
10. Identifying opportunities for habitat improvements/modifications to improve trout reproductive and recruitment success, translating to enhanced angler experience and the opportunity for related economic benefits for local communities.
11. Planning for healthy riverine systems that supports a variety of ecosystem goods and services.

See the Scope of Work for Phase I specific objectives.

Existing Information

Three key bodies of work contain information that establish a baseline for the IWMP process to build upon.

Middle Colorado Watershed Plan. This [Plan](#), published in 2016, was crafted to promote and facilitate partnerships that lead to increased capacity at the local level to protect and enhance water quality, to promote smart and efficient water use and conservation, and to sustain and improve the health of the watershed. As one of its priority strategies, the Plan describes the intent to “participate in a Colorado Basin Roundtable planning process to develop an Integrated Water Management Plan for the mainstem of the Colorado River.” Technical baseline information available in the plan includes sections on: 1) physical characteristics of the watershed, 2) water quantity management, controls and uses; 3) demographics and economic activity; 4) land uses that affect water quality; 5) wildlife, 6) recreation, and 7) a surface water quality data analysis.

Colorado Roundtable BIP and Support Documents. The BIP reports on both consumptive and non-consumptive use gaps in the basin to the extent that these are known. It pulls on data from a variety of supporting studies including the State Water Supply Initiative (SWSI 2010), the Non-Consumptive Needs Assessment (2010), and application of the Watershed Flow Evaluation Tool. As stated in the BIP “...while

these studies provide an insightful, big picture look at reaches of concern due to changes in flows, it is not focused on how to best address these vulnerabilities from a site-specific perspective.” The IWMP work will pick up where these previous analyses left off. The BIP also provides a list of priority projects and processes for the middle Colorado River, as identified by local stakeholders, that will be used when engaging key stakeholders in initial discussions, particularly those related to consumptive use needs. Updated SWSI 2017 findings will be incorporated into the IWMP work as appropriate.

Colorado Roundtable Integrated Water Management Plan Framework. Work products that result from this effort including literature compilations, databases, analysis tools, and recommended methodologies will be used and/or considered in support of the IWMP effort.

Organizational Capacity

MCWC is the project sponsor and will assume responsibility as project manager. Examples of similar planning projects undertaken by the organization include: 1) the 2016 Watershed Plan (and companion document “Analysis of Surface Water Quality Data” (2015)) funded by the Colorado Nonpoint Source Pollution Control program, 2) Expansion of the MCWC (completed 2017) which included several deliverables that refined elements of the Watershed Plan, as funded by the Bureau of Reclamation Cooperative Watershed Management Program, and 3) a Watershed Assessment of the Rifle Creek Basin (completion date early 2018) as funded jointly by the Bureau of Land Management and the Colorado Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program. Guidance for these projects was provided by MCWC advisory committees as listed in Attachment B.

Laurie Rink, Executive Director, will act as Project Manager. Laurie is currently engaged as a contractor to the organization and will be allocating a one-third FTE equivalent to the project. Educated as a scientist, Laurie has worked in the field of aquatic ecology and restoration for over thirty years with specific expertise in watershed management, wetland ecology, water quality assessment, and regulatory compliance. Other MCWC contract staff include a watershed specialist and a community outreach coordinator who will each contribute to the project at less than 5% FTE. Jim Pokrandt, Director of Community Affairs for the Colorado River District, will be providing facilitation services as part of Task 2. Jim is currently the Chair for the Colorado Roundtable. See Attachment C for short resumes. MCWC will contract with one or more specialty consultants to conduct the technical work associated with planning.

Monitoring and Implementation Plan

In terms of monitoring for and evaluating success of the planning efforts, the project will reflect on the original objectives and evaluate whether: 1) quality data was collected at the level needed to drive the planning process and set a baseline for monitoring and evaluating future implementation activities, 2) the plan articulates clearly defined, actionable strategies and projects that fulfill the project objectives, and 3) stakeholders have been engaged to the degree needed to select a priority set of projects or strategies for near-term implementation and/or identify additional planning needs that moves the ball closer to implementation.

Budget, Match and Schedule

The full project worth is valued at \$415,200. A request of 50% of the cash funding in the amount of \$207,600 is being requested through this grant program with matching cash of just under 20%, or \$73,400 from the Colorado Basin Roundtable WSRF. Local government has pledged \$28,000 in cash. The remaining \$66,200 of in-kind funding is provided from a variety of sources. Detail on match and project schedule are provided in the Scope of Work.

Scope of Work

Grantee and Fiscal Agent: Middle Colorado Watershed Council

Address: 200 Lions Park Circle, Rifle, CO 81650

Phone: 970-625-1829

Project Name: Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Plan

Grant Amount: \$ 207,600

Introduction and Background

The long-term goal of the IWMP project is to improve security for all water uses in the planning area by understanding and protecting existing uses, meeting shortages, and maintaining healthy riverine ecosystems in the face of increased future demand and climate uncertainty. The planning and implementation effort will be conducted in a series of phases as stakeholder interest and funding allows. The first phase initiates a process of identifying water needs for environmental and recreational uses, determining if gaps exist and, if so, finding voluntary-based solutions for filling the gaps in conjunction with the needs of agricultural, domestic and industrial water users. The geographic focus in phase one is on the “middle” section of the Colorado River, an area that includes 75 miles of the mainstem (see map Attachment A). Funding will be used to conduct technical assessments, develop a hydrology model, and support a robust stakeholder engagement process that will help inform the investigation of, selection, and prioritization of projects, processes and/or management actions that further the long-term planning goal. Outcomes from phase one will chart the course for a subsequent phase of planning work in a subset of tributaries to the middle Colorado, and will likely include recommendations for implementation projects on the mainstem.

Objectives for Phase I Funding Request

Please see the proposal narrative for a discussion of the long-term project goal and objectives. Specific objectives for this phase I funding request are as follows:

- Engage key stakeholders in the planning process to understand local values around water uses and the desire to balance non-consumptive and consumptive use needs, to identify opportunities for collaboration in problem solving to fill need gaps, and to establish goals and priorities for project and program implementation.
- Understand the hydrology of the mainstem and its interplay with environmental and recreational attributes and consumptive use demands under existing conditions and with the ability to analyze a variety of future forecasted scenarios.
- Assess the current ecological health, integrity and function of the mainstem in order to determine areas of impairment and relation to flow.
- Characterize the environmental and recreational needs in terms of ecosystem goods and services to understand where modification or improvement may return the highest value, and to provide a framework for developing implementation goals and priorities.
- Identify, evaluate, and prioritize a set of projects, processes, and/or or management actions that addresses non-consumptive use need gaps while integrating, to the extent possible, actions that address consumptive use shortages and needs.
- Develop a strategy for phase II planning and project implementation based upon outcomes of phase I.

Activities and Tasks

Activity 1. Project Management

Task 1.1. Project Management, Reporting and Expenses

Description

MCWC will coordinate efforts between project consultants, organize and submit project deliverables, account for in-kind project contributions, communicate regularly with CWCB staff on progress made, and prepare and submit semi-annual and final project reports. Included in this task are costs associated with travel (mileage reimbursement, lodging), public meeting expenses (facilities and materials), and reporting related expenses.

Deliverables

1. Quarterly invoices with requested accounting detail (8).
2. Semi-annual project reports (3), final project report (1).

Activity 2. Engaging Stakeholders

Task 2.1. Project Advisory Committee

Description

MCWC will form a project-specific advisory committee with representatives from each water use/management sector to guide the IWMP process.

Methods/Procedure

This group will meet regularly throughout the two-year planning process for an estimated total of ten meetings and provide input on stakeholder engagement strategies, technical and organizational methodologies, the evolution of project goals and objectives, and the selection of focus areas for subsequent planning phases. Group discussions will be facilitated. MCWC intends to also utilize its existing Technical Advisory Committee and Riparian Restoration Advisory Group for topic-specific input, as appropriate (see committee rosters Attachment B).

Deliverables

1. Advisory Committee meeting minutes (10).

Task 2.2. Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Plan

Description

MCWC will develop a Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Plan that articulates a strategy for engaging and soliciting input from stakeholders who have a vested interest in the outcome of the planning work and future implementation of planning recommendations.

Methods/Procedure

The plan will: 1) contain a list of key stakeholders from the following sectors: agriculture, environment (wildlife and riparian ecology), recreation and tourism, water management, and government related to land use planning and management/utilities/public health; 2) detail why and how each of these groups

will be involved along with desired outcomes, and 3) outline a general schedule for stakeholder meetings over the life of the planning process. The plan will also address the need for additional outreach and education to generally inform key stakeholders and the public about the study need and purpose, share study findings, solicit meaningful input as the project proceeds, and set the stage for successful IWMP implementation.

Deliverables

1. Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Plan.

Task 2.3. Implementing Outreach and Engagement

Description

MCWC will implement the various elements outlined in the Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Plan.

Methods/Procedure

A series of public meetings will be planned and executed by MCWC utilizing the services of an experienced facilitator. A total of five are currently contemplated and will be scheduled to coincide with the availability of results from the various technical studies and analyses. These meetings will serve as a structured outlet for disseminating information generated through the term of the planning process.

It is also anticipated that a significant portion of targeted public outreach, as conducted by MCWC staff, will occur through periodic meetings with City and Town Councils, boards of the local conservation and water conservancy districts, oil and gas industry representatives, irrigation ditch company boards, individual land owners and water rights holders, the Garfield County Water Forum, and the Colorado Basin Roundtable.

The MCWC will utilize its established network of community outreach outlets (e.g., newspaper, social media, public radio, website, etc.) to further disseminate project-related information community-wide.

Deliverables

1. Minutes from public meetings.
2. Log of meetings, attendees, discussion topics, and summarized outcomes.
3. Various outreach and education resources (e.g., op-eds, radio interviews, print materials, etc.).

Activity 3. Assessing Conditions

Task 3.1. Refine Hydrological Simulation Modelling Tools

Description

River systems subject to hydrological change under human management are vulnerable to shifts in the composition and resiliency of both structural and biological components of the ecosystem. The Natural Flow Paradigm (Poff et al., 1997) postulates that streamflows represent the key driver of riverine structure and function. Changes in the timing and magnitude of various elements of the hydrological regime can produce cascading effects (or positive feedback loops) between: 1) the availability and quality of aquatic habitat, 2) the condition and extent of riparian zones, and 3) the dynamics and evolutionary trajectory of channel structure. Therefore, a detailed understanding of the hydrological

regime at various locations throughout a watershed provides important context for understanding changes to other ecosystem components.

Methods/Procedure

In order to provide this understanding in Colorado, it is necessary to characterize the administrative and operational conditions that govern the way that water is stored, diverted, consumed, and returned to river systems in time and place. MCWC's consultant will refine the Colorado River Basin daily StateMod simulation model developed for the Hutchin's Water Center to enable daily streamflow simulations at all major tributary confluences and surface water diversion points along the mainstem Colorado River between Dotsero and DeBeque Canyon. The simulation model will be used to understand differences between hydrological regime behavior under natural conditions, existing conditions, and several future climate-change and/or demand scenarios as described by the Colorado River Water Availability Study. The specific scenarios evaluated will be selected by local stakeholders.

Deliverables:

1. Command files for the refined hydrological simulation model published to a public repository.
2. Data tables containing statistical characterizations of natural, existing, and future hydrological regime behavior at major tributary junctions and surface water diversions throughout the study area.
3. Graphics characterizing typical hydrographs under wet, average, and dry conditions at major tributary junctions, reservoirs, and surface water diversions throughout the study area.

Task 3.2. Characterize Ecological Health, Integrity and Delivery of Ecosystem Goods and Services

Description

Landscape and channel scale processes play a significant role in driving the condition of ecological resources that local communities typically derive value from. Interactions between hydrology, channel morphology, water quality, and sediment transport mediate riparian conditions, aquatic habitat quality and availability, assimilation of pollutants, and the ability of local residents to recreate on streams and rivers. Some of the key attributes for the middle Colorado that will be evaluated in determining ecological health, integrity and ability to deliver ecosystem goods and services include:

- Current functioning of riparian ecosystems – how does the presence of invasives influence function and how is existing habitat structure related to flow management.
- Currently identified water quality impairments – how are these impairments related to flow and are there any flow-related water quality impairments that may be foreseen in the future.
- Habitat needs for fish with a specific focus on threatened and endangered (T&E) warm water fish and the three fish species of special concern - are there current or future foreseeable flow impairments that have or may in the future trigger regulatory action.
- Habitat needs for trout – are there sufficient flows connecting the tributaries to the mainstem at the right time of year to support robust and natural reproduction of trout populations that in turn support the economies of angler use.
- Current and contemplated recreational development – where is this occurring and are river flows sufficient to support the uses.

Method/Procedure

MCWC will contract with a consultant to complete literature reviews, desktop assessments (e.g. GIS and aerial photography analysis, hydrological time series evaluation, etc.) and rapid field assessments to characterize the existing condition of riverine systems. At a minimum, literature reviews will consider the 2010 SWSI Non-Consumptive Needs Assessment, the Middle Colorado River Watershed Plan, the Middle Colorado Surface Water Data Analysis, the Middle Colorado Riparian Restoration Action Plan, Colorado Headwaters Invasives Partnership's Consolidated Species Management Plan, the Colorado Natural Heritage Program Survey of Critical Biological Resources of Garfield County, newly available riparian habitat mapping through the Tamarisk Coalition and Colorado State University, and other reports, studies, and data sets made available on the Hutchin's Water Center's Upper Colorado River Resource Guide. Data collection and analysis activities will, at a minimum, include characterization of stream geomorphology, riparian health and biodiversity, aquatic biodiversity, and hydrological regime behavior in a way that facilitates understanding key relationships between hydrology and other elements of ecosystem structure and function. This assessment will also include an identification of areas of high biodiversity value (e.g. rare and significant plant communities). Output will be organized around the FACStream framework, the Colorado Stream Health Assessment Framework or a similar framework under development by Colorado Mesa University and the CBRT. Use of one of these frameworks will facilitate communication with stakeholders regarding existing ecosystem conditions.

Subsequently, MCWC and its consultant will work with local stakeholders to characterize and prioritize the ecosystem goods and services that local communities derive from the riverine landscape. Relevant categories of ecosystem services include *regulating services* (e.g. flood abatement, groundwater recharge, water purification), *provisioning services* (e.g. agricultural production, drinking water supply, capture fisheries), and *cultural services* (e.g. boating recreation, angling recreation, aesthetic values). This assessment will evaluate qualitative information (e.g. local perceptions and anecdotal evidence) in addition to quantitative data (e.g. hydrological time series, consumptive use water demands, proximity of infrastructure to floodplains, recreational use surveys, etc.) to characterize the relative demand for ecosystem goods and services on stream reaches throughout the project area and the ability of the system to meet those demands.

MCWC and its consultant will consider hydrological modeling and ecological integrity assessment results to identify the primary drivers of and greatest risks to unsatisfied demand for ecosystem goods and services. Drivers may include hydrological regime modification, land use activities and infrastructure development in floodplains, non-point source pollution, invasive species, or lack of recreational access points. The specific type and number of methods applied to complete this analysis will be based on data availability, refinement of project geographic scope and scale, and preferences expressed by stakeholders.

Deliverables

1. Report and accompanying maps and graphics summarizing results of the ecological integrity assessment.
2. Report and accompanying maps and graphics summarizing the relative priorities that local communities assign to the delivery of ecosystem goods and services from streams and rivers in the project area.
3. Report identifying the primary drivers of and greatest risks, including flow needs, to unsatisfied demand for ecosystem goods and services across the project area.

Activity 4. Articulating Planning Goals and Objectives

Task 4.1. Identify High-Priority Management Issues and Locations

Description

Stakeholders will prioritize river segments and management issues for subsequent planning steps. This task will require consideration of management issues that respond to existing conditions or anticipate some altered future condition.

Method/Procedure

MCWC and its consultant will summarize assessment results produced by Task 3.2 to guide discussions with local stakeholders about high priority management issues in the project area. Identified management issues may include invasive riparian species management, existing water quality impairments, important migration or spawning areas for trout and native fish, anticipated impacts to non-consumptive uses that result from water (or land) development projects or changes in climate. Throughout the issue identification process, MCWC will work with stakeholders to refine and/or expand the planning considerations listed above to ensure they sufficiently reflect local concerns and perspectives regarding the delivery of ecosystem goods and services.

Deliverables

1. Report summarizing stakeholder preferences and priorities for addressing issues in specific geographic areas.
2. Map of high priority management areas.

Task 4.2. Select Management Goals and Objectives

Description

Stakeholders will articulate specific management goals and objectives that respond to the high-priority issues identified previously.

Method/Procedure

MCWC and its consultant will guide discussion with local stakeholders to identify specific management objectives that respond to the issues identified in Task 4.1. This effort will include discussions of morphologically-based, biologically-based, or flow-based management targets used as a direct or indirect measure of riparian area health, health of aquatic biota, recreational use opportunity, or receipt of ecosystem services. Management targets may focus on a specific component of the aquatic or riparian ecosystem (e.g. trout biomass), a measure/indicator of whole ecosystem integrity (e.g. Multi-Metric scores for aquatic macroinvertebrates), or on the quality and quantity of ecosystem goods and services received by local communities (e.g. number of “boatable days” available to recreational users).

Deliverables

1. Report summarizing management goals and objectives that respond to the issues identified in Task 4.1.

Activity 5. Identifying Alternatives

Task 5.1. Identify Alternatives that Meet Planning Goals and Objectives

Description

MCWC will work with stakeholders to identify several candidate structural projects, collaborative processes or management actions that respond to the previously-identified management issues and objectives.

Methods/Procedures

Candidate actions will be drawn from several sources. Initially alternatives will be identified through internal assessment of hydrological conditions, water use and administration, and ecological needs. Discussions with stakeholders and reference to the Colorado Roundtable's BIP list of Identified Projects and Processes (IPPs) may additionally provide candidate actions for implementation in the project area. Structural projects, collaborative processes or management actions may include, but will not be limited to, protection measures for high-value attributes, diversion structure improvements, agricultural efficiency improvements, in-channel habitat restoration, invasive species control and riparian habitat restoration, reservoir development and release schedule recommendations, and water leasing programs.

Deliverables

1. Table listing the identified alternatives, the issue(s) each responds to, the primary stakeholder(s) implicated, and a high-level evaluation of expected costs and benefits associated with each.

Activity 6. Identifying Next Steps

Task 6.1. Characterize Effectiveness and Feasibility of Alternatives

Description

Prioritization of alternative actions requires a robust approach for describing the relative effectiveness and feasibility of each.

Method/Procedure

MCWC will identify the stakeholders that should be primarily engaged in discussions about the relative merits of the identified alternatives. Stakeholder identification requires careful consideration of organizational missions, jurisdictional boundaries, personalities, and existing patterns of land and water use.

MCWC's consultant will utilize conceptual models, weight of evidence approaches, or numerical simulations to predict ecological and recreational use outcomes of each candidate alternative action. Predicted outcomes will be assessed against stakeholder-identified management objectives. Actions will then be ranked against each other based on their predicted ability to meet stated objectives.

The characterization of feasibility for each alternative requires careful evaluation of administrative, legal, financial, and institutional constraints. MCWC's consultant will aggregate streamflow records, hydrological simulation products, records from the Colorado Department of Water Resources, land ownership and cadastral data, and existing engineering reports to support discussions with local water

users about the demands, efficiencies, and use shortages associated with various uses of water from the high-priority reaches. This effort may also utilize available engineering assessments or secure new conceptual level assessments to provide important information about the costs of structural projects. Conversations with the local Water Commissioner will help identify critical administrative constraints on water management alternatives. Through this process, MCWC hopes to simultaneously characterize project feasibility and identify likely proponents/champions for specific issues. At the conclusion of this effort, all alternatives will be ranked according to their relative feasibility.

Finally, MCWC and its consultant will integrate the results from the effectiveness and feasibility assessments to identify high-priority actions for protecting or improving ecological integrity and the delivery of ecosystem goods and services to local communities. Conceptual level implementation plans for each action will be developed. Implementation plans will identify project champions, affected stakeholders, recommendations for overcoming technical, financial, or legal constraints, anticipated outcomes, and a monitoring plan for assessing long-term effectiveness.

Deliverables

1. Report summarizing the relative effectiveness and perceived feasibility of each alternative action and identifying high-priority actions, accordingly.
2. Conceptual implementation plan for high-priority actions.

Task 6.2. Develop Strategy for Phase II Efforts

Description

Completion of Phase I of this multi-year project will provide evidence, experience, and a history of stakeholder engagement that will allow MCWC to develop a refined strategy for conducting similar efforts on tributaries to the Colorado River between Glenwood Springs and De Beque. It may also yield implementation plans that are ripe for funding consideration as part of a phase II effort.

Method/Procedure

MCWC will work with its consultant to reflect on geographic areas within the Middle Colorado watershed, experiences with stakeholders, and high-priority issues identified by the local community to determine which sub-basins in the watershed are good candidates for continued integrated water management planning and/or specific project or program implementation. In relation to future planning opportunities, MCWC will evaluate the relative successes and merits of the planning process used in phase I to identify elements that require modification to ensure adequate alignment with local priorities or common lines of questioning.

Deliverables

1. Strategy that can be used to develop future grant requests for Phase II implementation and continued planning.

Budget

<u>Task No.</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>CWCB Funds</u>	<u>Other Funding Cash</u>	<u>Other Funding Cash WSRF CoRT</u>	<u>Other Funding In-Kind</u>	<u>Total</u>
1.1	Project Management, Reporting, Expenses	\$17,000	\$5,500	\$700	\$0	\$23,200
2.1	Project Advisory Committee	\$0	\$0	\$8,200	\$38,000	\$46,200
2.2	Staeholder Outreach/Engagement Plan	\$0	\$0	\$6,600		\$6,600
2.3	Implementing Outreach and Engagement	\$0	\$0	\$49,900	\$24,000	\$73,900
3.1	Refine Hydrological Simulation Modelling Tools	\$11,400	\$3,700	\$500	\$0	\$15,600
3.2	Characterize Ecological Integrity/Delivery of Ecosystem Goods and Services	\$97,300	\$32,000	\$4,000	\$4,200	\$137,500
4.1	Identify High Priority Management Issues and Locations	\$6,000	\$2,000	\$200	\$0	\$8,200
4.2	Select Management Goals and Objectives	\$16,700	\$5,400	\$700	\$0	\$22,800
5	Identify Alternatives that Meeting Planning Goals and Objectives	\$2,900	\$1,000	\$200	\$0	\$4,100
6.1	Characterize Effectiveness and Feasibility of Alternatives	\$37,600	\$12,300	\$1,600	\$0	\$51,500
6.2	Develop Strategy for Phase II Efforts	\$18,700	\$6,100	\$800	\$0	\$25,600
Total		\$207,600	\$68,000	\$73,400	\$66,200	\$415,200

Cash and Non-Cash Match

Contributing Entity	Amount and Form of Match
Colorado Roundtable (pending approval November 2018)	\$73,400 cash
Garfield County (pending 2018 budget approval)	\$25,000 cash
City of Rifle (pending 2018 budget approval)	\$1,000 cash
City of Glenwood Springs (pending 2018 budget approval)	\$2,000 cash
Colorado River District	\$12,000 In-kind for facilitation services

Technical Advisors	\$30,000 in-kind for technical assistance from the to-be-formed planning Advisory Committee, and the existing MCWC Technical Advisory Committee and Riparian Restoration Advisory Group
Tamarisk Coalition	\$4,200 in-kind for TC staff working on detailed riparian vegetation mapping and characterization for the mainstem Colorado
Community Stakeholders	\$20,000 in-kind for community members who participate in outreach and engagement efforts
Gates Family Foundation (not secured)	\$40,000 cash
Total Match	\$207,600

List of Attachments

Attachment A – Project Map

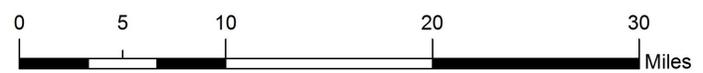
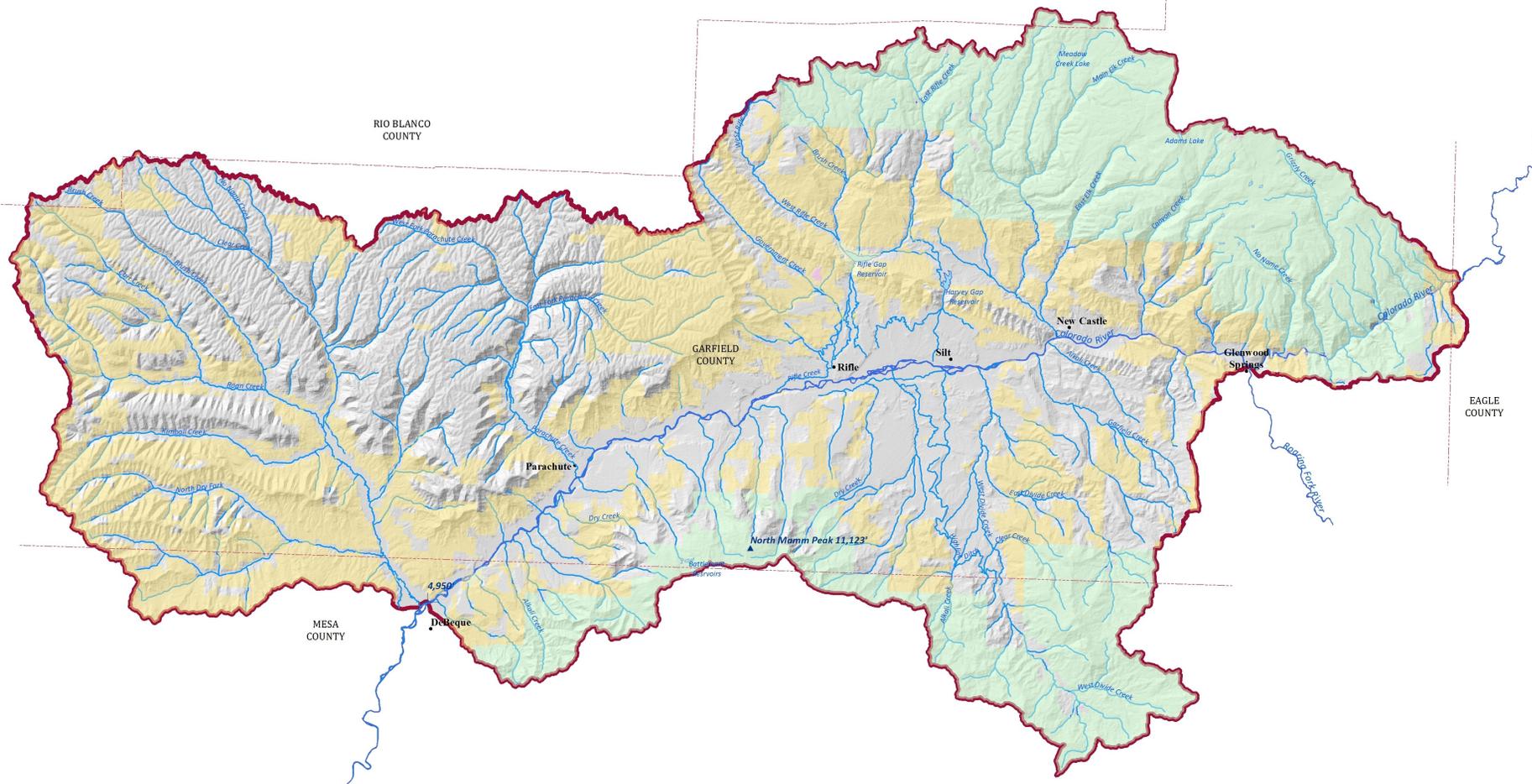
Attachment B – Roster of MCWC Advisory Committees

Attachment C – Key Personnel Experience

Attachment D – Letters of Support

- Bureau of Land Management Colorado River Valley Field Office
- City of Glenwood Springs
- City of Rifle
- Colorado River District
- Colorado River Roundtable
- Eagle River Watershed Council
- Garfield County
- Glenwood Springs River Commission
- Hutchins Water Center at Colorado Mesa University
- Tamarisk Coalition
- Town of De Beque
- Town of New Castle
- Town of Parachute
- West Divide Water Conservancy District
- Western Colorado Conservation Corps

The Middle Colorado River Watershed



ATTACHMENT B – Roster of MCWC Advisory Committees

Existing Committees of the MCWC that can be utilized by the IWMP Advisory Committee on a topic-specific basis.

MCWC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):

Angie Fowler (MCWC Board and SGM)
Bailey Leppek (SGM)
Carmia Woolley (BLM)
Chad Mickschl (BLM)
Clay Ramey (USFS)
Dave Kanzer (Colorado River District)
David Graf (Colorado Parks and Wildlife)
Jared Emmert (MCWC Board and City of Rifle)
Judith Thomas (USGS)
Ken Leib (USGS)
Kirby Winn (Garfield County)
Mark Weinhold (USFS)
Maria Pastore (MCWC Board)
Morgan Hill (MCWC Board and Garfield County)
Perry Cabot (CSU Extension)
Rick Barth (City of Rifle)
Sonja Chavez (Colorado River District)
Steven Jaouen (NRCS)
Tom Probert (USFS)
Travis Porter (MCWC Board)
Wendy Ryan (West Divide Water Conservancy District)

Riparian Restoration Advisory Group (RRAG):

Abby Burk (Audubon)

Bob Timberman (Partners for Wildlife – USFWS)
Brian Gray (Colorado Parks and Wildlife)
Bruce Smith (Western Water and Land)
Carla DeYoung (BLM)
Carmia Woolley (BLM)
Celene Hawkins (The Nature Conservancy)
Chad Mickschl (BLM)
Chris Treese (Colorado River District)
David Graf (Colorado Parks and Wildlife)
Gigi Richard (Colorado Mesa University)
Jared Emmert (City of Rifle)
Jeff Roberts (Western Colorado Conservation Corps)
Lindsay Murdoch (Tamarisk Coalition)
Matt Annabel (Aspen Valley Land Trust)
Richard Gytenbeek (Trout Unlimited)
Rob Bleiberg (Mesa Land Trust)
Russell Knight (Natural Resource Conservation Service)
Rusty Lloyd (Tamarisk Coalition)
Sarah Marshall (Colorado Natural Heritage Program)
Shannon Hatch (Tamarisk Coalition)
Steve Anthony (Garfield County Vegetation Management)
Steven Jaouen (Natural Resource Conservation Service)
Suzanne Stephens (Aspen Valley Land Trust)
Teresa Nees (Mesa County Weed Control)

ATTACHMENT C – Key Personnel Experience

Laurie Rink – Project Manager

Laurie works as a contractor for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council in the current capacity of Executive Director. Laurie was originally hired by the Council to set up its nonprofit structure, complete a water quality assessment of the watershed, and write a watershed plan. Laurie has since managed several related planning and implementation projects supported by federal (Bureau of Reclamation, BLM), state (Colorado Nonpoint Source Pollution Control, Colorado Parks and Wildlife Wetland Habitat Restoration) and local granting sources.

Before moving to the west slope, Laurie lived and worked in the South Platte River basin and chaired a watershed organization that encompasses the metropolitan area of Denver. This work was done on behalf of her client, the Farmer's Reservoir and Irrigation Company (FRICO), as part of her managing its water quality program. Laurie was instrumental in helping author a watershed plan, a total maximum daily load analysis, and an implementation plan for meeting water quality standards in Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir. She managed a Colorado Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Grant valued at over one million dollars that included water quality sampling and analysis and development of a watershed water quality model (SWAT) and in-reservoir water quality model (WASP) to understand the dynamics of lake eutrophication processes.

Her work for both organizations encompasses two significant watershed areas where collaboration with stakeholders is key to successful project implementation.

Jim Pokrandt – Project Facilitator

Jim works for the Colorado River District as the community relations director. He has been with the River District since 2005. Prior to joining the Colorado River District, Jim worked in community-level newspapers for 30 years, the last 13 in various mountain communities in Western Colorado.

The Colorado River District was founded in 1937 to protect western Colorado water in the face of transmountain diversions. That work has evolved to work on Colorado River issues directed at protecting and balancing interests among the many stakeholders on the river from agriculture, municipal users, recreation and the environment.

Jim is also the chair of the Colorado Basin Roundtable, one of the nine Roundtables in Colorado created in 2005 by the General Assembly to discuss and help solve a projected water supply shortage in Colorado, again balancing the interests and concerns of stakeholders and citizens.

Attachment D – Letters of Support

Bureau of Land Management Colorado River Valley Field Office
City of Glenwood Springs
City of Rifle
Colorado River District
Colorado River Roundtable
Eagle River Watershed Council
Garfield County
Glenwood Springs River Commission
Hutchins Water Center at Colorado Mesa University
Tamarisk Coalition
Town of De Beque
Town of New Castle
Town of Parachute
West Divide Water Conservancy District
Western Colorado Conservation Corps



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
COLORADO RIVER VALLEY FIELD OFFICE
2300 River Frontage Road
Silt, CO 81652
www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/crvfo.html



In Reply Refer to:
7220 (CON040)

October 26, 2017

Colorado Water Conservation Board
ATTN: Chris Sturm
1313 Sherman St., Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Chris Sturm:

I write to express my strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to facilitate Integrated Water Management Planning in the middle Colorado River. This project will take important steps towards improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by understanding existing and future use needs and gaps, developing strategies for meeting shortages, and planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems.

The Bureau of Land Management Colorado River Valley Field Office (BLM CRVFO) is located in Silt, Colorado, along the Colorado River. The mission of the BLM is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the multiple use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Considering the mission of the BLM, the BLM CRVFO supports the Integrated Water Management Planning project because we are dedicated to managing water resources along the middle Colorado River as BLM lands rely on the water quality and quantity supplied by the river.

Along the middle Colorado River, the BLM CRVFO administers public land with a variety of resources (such as terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat) and resource uses including, but not limited to, recreation, livestock grazing, forestry, and natural resource development. All of these resources and resource uses rely on the Colorado River. We are inherently interested in a broader understanding of existing river use and planning for future use in order to maintain suitable conditions for resources and resource uses.

Additionally, the IWMP for the middle Colorado River would assist the identification of priority areas by assessing each reach, which would in turn help prioritize future work extending into the tributaries and foster collaborative, efficient efforts. This is of particular interest as the BLM CRVFO manages multiple watersheds that feed into the Colorado River.

The BLM CRVFO is ready to be engaged and supportive of the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Planning project. We are prepared to serve the public interest in the planning and evaluation of these resources. We are able to commit to in-kind resource donations in the form of data collection, data analysis, and environmental assessments, if necessary. Please give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application the highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Chad Mickschl
Hydrologist
(970) 876-9071



City of Glenwood Springs
101 West 8th Street
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601

Michael Gamba, Mayor
970-384-6441

October 26, 2017

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program

Mr. Sturm,

On behalf of the City of Glenwood Springs, I would like to express my strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to support Integrated Water Management Planning in the middle Colorado River. This project will take important steps towards improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by understanding existing and future use needs and gaps, developing strategies for meeting shortages, and planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems.

The City of Glenwood Springs relies heavily on the middle Colorado watershed, and we believe in protecting this critical resource. The City supports the Integrated Water Management Planning project because it will evaluate flow needs in supporting our recreation-based local economies and the local jobs that serve the industry and encourage broad participation in collaborative problem solving to meeting our current and future water related demands.

The City of Glenwood Springs is ready to be engaged and supportive of the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Planning project. We commit to helping disseminate study results within our organization and encouraging our constituents to participate in public meeting and focus groups.

Please give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application the highest consideration.

Best Regards,

Michael Gamba
Mayor of Glenwood Springs, Colorado

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

202 Railroad Avenue, Rifle, CO 81650

Phone: 970-665-6490 Fax: 970-625-6268



October 23, 2017

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program

Dear Mr. Sturm,

I write to express my strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program.

The creation of an Integrated Water Management Plan for the middle Colorado River is extremely important to the City of Rifle. Rifle is located within the area served by the MCWC. Both the Colorado River and Rifle Creek run through the middle of our community.

Rifle depends on the quantity and quality of water that flows in the Colorado River. We use it for drinking water, for irrigation, for recreation, for our economy, and for the health of our ecosystem. The City of Rifle believes long-term planning for our local water system is critical. This grant would allow us to engage the community, hear their priorities, and educate citizens on how we can protect our water.

The City of Rifle is ready to be engaged and supportive of the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Planning project. We commit to providing staff time and in-kind resources to the project. Please give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application the highest consideration.

Sincerely,

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

Nathan Lindquist
Planning Director



October 10, 2017

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application for Watershed Restoration Grant Program

Dear Chris:

I write to express my strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to support Integrated Water Management Planning in the middle Colorado River. This project will take important steps towards improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by expanding understanding of existing and future uses and supply gaps, developing strategies for meeting shortages, and planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems.

The Colorado River District is pleased to have been a partner with the Middle Colorado River Council from its formation and looks forward to assisting with this latest management/planning effort. The River District supports the Integrated Water Management project as the logical follow-on to the Council's recently completed watershed plan, which we also supported with through a variety of contributed and cooperative resources. Encouragingly, the Council has committed to an inclusive, basin-wide planning and management of the region's water resources for all water users as well as for the substantial recreational and environmental needs of the watershed. We see the efforts of the Council and the products of the Management Plan as supportive of and additive to the mission and activities of the Colorado River District. Only with the help of concentrated, inclusive, integrated planning on the watershed level can the River District fulfill its statutory mission of protection and development of Colorado's water resources of the Colorado River basin for the benefit of the entire state.

The Colorado River District stands ready to engage and support the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Planning project. We are committed to assisting with the Integrated Plan with time, technical resources, and other considerations. Please give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Treese, Manager
External Affairs

THE COLORADO BASIN ROUNDTABLE
C/O P.O. BOX 1120
GLENWOOD SPRINGS, COLORADO 81602

October 20, 2017

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program

Dear Chris,

The Colorado Basin Roundtable supports the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to undertake Integrated Water Management Planning in the middle Colorado River. This project will take important steps toward improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by understanding existing and future use needs and gaps, developing strategies for meeting shortages and planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems.

The project addresses top priorities identified in our Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) to encourage basin-wide watershed planning and management of water resources for agricultural, industrial and municipal users as well as for recreation and the environment. The approach will advance understanding of both consumptive and non-consumptive use need gaps and encourage broad participation in collaborative problem solving. The integrated nature of the planning work hits on all six themes identified in the BIP and, particularly, the theme of Ecosystem Health – To Protect and Restore Streams, Rivers, Lakes and Riparian Areas. This work will make a significant contribution to the Roundtable's ideal for a comprehensive management plan that operates from the Colorado River headwaters to the state line.

The Middle Colorado IWMP will be one of the first planning efforts in the basin to benefit from the fruits of the Roundtable's IWMP Framework project. As the Framework project comes to a close in the next few months, we expect it to provide useful tools and direction for the Middle Colorado IWMP effort and others that follow.

Sincerely yours,



Jim Pokrandt
Chair, Colorado Basin Roundtable



330 Broadway, Unit D
PO Box 5740
Eagle, Colorado 81631

970-827-5406
info@erwc.org
www.erwc.org
Tax ID#: 20-4448864

Advocates for our rivers

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program

Dear Mr. Sturm,

I write to express Eagle River Watershed Council's (ERWC) strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) Integrated Water Management Planning (IWMP) in the middle Colorado River and for the support of the CWCB for that plan through the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program.

Eagle River Watershed Council is the direct upstream watershed group to MCWC. As a watershed group also working on an IWMP, we see real benefit in our two adjacent organizations undertaking these efforts simultaneously. The two planning processes will be complimentary and ERWC and MCWC plan to communicate regularly throughout our processes, which will help both organizations to learn from one another, creating more robust IWMPs for both sub-basins. Additionally, the MCWC's IWMP addresses a top priority of the Colorado Water Plan and the Colorado River Basin Implementation Plan.

ERWC looks forward to seeing the progress of the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Planning project. I respectfully encourage you to give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application strong consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Holly Loff".

Holly Loff
Executive Director

Tom Jankovsky

District 1

John Martin, Chair

District 2

Mike Samson, Chair Pro Tem

District 3



November 3, 2017

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program

Dear Mr. Sturm,

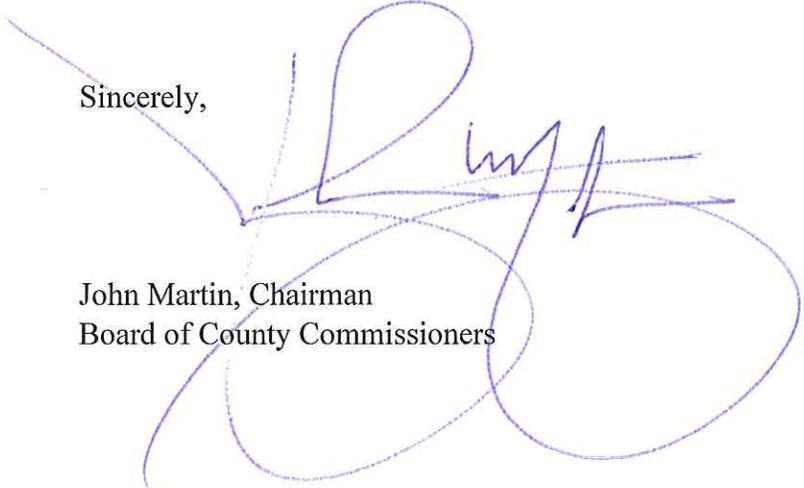
On behalf of the Garfield County Board of County Commissioners, I am writing to express our strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to support Integrated Water Management Planning in the middle Colorado River. This project will take important steps towards improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by understanding existing and future use needs and gaps, developing strategies for meeting shortages, and planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems.

Garfield County includes a population of 56,000 and six incorporated municipalities. There are strong agriculture and recreation components to the economy in Garfield County. Our mission is to serve the people in matters of health, safety and welfare, including helping to ensure water resources for all agricultural, industrial and municipal users, as well as for recreation and the environment. Garfield County actively supports the Colorado Basin Roundtable and this Integrated Water Management Planning project addresses one of their top priorities, which is basin-wide planning and management of water resources. The Integrated Water Management Planning project will evaluate the environmental flow related needs for the middle section of the Colorado River which provides critical habitat for a variety of important species of wildlife (ex. native fishes, threatened and endangered fish species) and the riparian areas they rely upon. In addition, Garfield County has a strong recreation-based economy and the proposed project will evaluate flow needs in supporting our recreation-based local economies and the local jobs that serve the industry.

The Integrated Water Management Planning project proposed by the Middle Colorado Watershed Council will advance our understanding of both consumptive and non-consumptive use need gaps and encourage broad participation in collaborative problem solving to meeting our current and future water related demands.

Garfield County is ready to be engaged and supportive of the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Planning project. We commit to a \$25,000 cash match and providing staff time in assisting with technical analysis and data collection, hosting meetings and events, and encouraging our constituents and interested stakeholders to participate in public meetings. Please give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application the highest consideration.

Sincerely,



John Martin, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

September 8, 2017

Laurie Rink, Executive Director
Middle Colorado Watershed Council
200 Lions Park Circle
Rifle, CO 81650



RE: Support for Grant; Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Plan

Dear Ms. Rink,

As Chairman of City of Glenwood Springs River Commission, I write to express our support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) grant application to the Colorado Water Conservation Board. The River Commission is a volunteer group of citizens who are professionally and personally invested in the management and health of the rivers, streams and riparian areas within and surrounding the City of Glenwood Springs. Additionally, we advise City Council on all river corridor issues related to said areas.

The River Commission supports the MCWC integrated water management plan project as it directly addresses one of the top priorities of the Colorado Basin Roundtable which is basin-wide planning and management of water resources for all agricultural, industrial, and municipal users as well as for recreation and the environment. A variety of species of fish and wildlife depend on the Colorado River for survival. Protecting and preserving this ecosystem is critical for their survival. A direct link exists between the health of this ecosystem and the tourism dollars that support numerous jobs and families in our basin. Our communities rely on the thriving cold water trout fisheries and the access to recreation on the Colorado for other activities such as white water rafting and kayaking. The project will help to identify options that protect this riparian ecosystem through better stream management.

The River Commission is a partner in the development of this project and continues to be engaged and supportive of the MCWC integrated water management plan. Please give the MCWC grant application the highest consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brendon Langenhuizen".

Brendon Langenhuizen, Chairman
City of Glenwood Springs River Commission

November 3, 2017

Colorado Water Conservation Board
ATTN: Chris Sturm
1313 Sherman St., Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Chris Sturm:

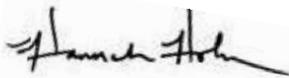
I write to express my strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to support Integrated Water Management Planning in the middle Colorado River.

This project will take important steps towards improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by improving our shared understanding existing and future use needs and gaps, developing strategies for meeting shortages, and planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems. This work directly responds to the Colorado Basin Roundtable Basin Implementation Plan priority goal of extending stream management planning throughout the basin.

I coordinate the Colorado Basin Roundtable Integrated Water Management Planning Framework Project for the Ruth Powell Hutchins Water Center at Colorado Mesa University, and I believe that the middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Planning project will complement the Framework Project, as well as help demonstrate to other communities how they can use the tools developed through the framework project. The Hutchins Water Center will support this project through helping to ascertain how the products developed through the Framework project can be applied to the benefit of the middle Colorado planning process.

If you have any questions in regards to our support, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at hholm@coloradomesa.edu or 970-248-1968.

Warm Regards,



Hannah Holm,
Coordinator



10/12/2017

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program

Dear Mr. Sturm,

I am writing to express our strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to support Integrated Water Management Planning along the middle Colorado River. This project will take important steps towards improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by understanding existing and future use, needs, and gaps. This approach will also develop strategies for meeting shortages while planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems.

Tamarisk Coalition (TC) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to advance the restoration of riparian lands through collaboration, education, and technical assistance. TC supports the Integrated Water Management Planning project as it will provide a planning and management strategy for precious water resources, critically important to riparian ecosystems. This project will ensure a long term, coordinated approach while encouraging broad participation in the management of river resources.

TC will commit in-kind resources to assist the Middle Colorado Watershed Council in the form of data management including geo-database framework creation and support, mapping resources, long-term funding procurement, and riparian restoration technical assistance. Please give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application the highest consideration.

If you have any question please feel free to call me at 970-256-7400.

Sincerely,

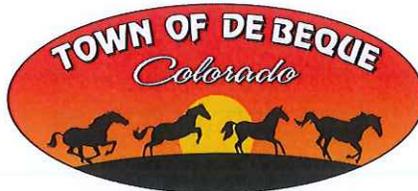
Rusty Lloyd, Program Director

FEIN 27-0007315

www.tamariskcoalition.org

P.O. Box 1907 Grand Junction, CO 81502

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



P.O. Box 60
381 Minter Avenue
De Beque, CO 81630

Ph: 970.283.5475
Fax: 970.283.5205
www.debeque.org

October 24, 2017

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program

Dear Mr. Sturm,

As Mayor of the Town of De Beque, I am writing to express my strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to support Integrated Water Management Planning in the middle Colorado River. This project will take important steps towards improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by understanding existing and future use needs and gaps, developing strategies for meeting shortages, and planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems.

The Town of De Beque is located at the western reaches of the planning region and is highly dependent on the Colorado River as its only supply of water. As a result we are very concerned about enhancing and protecting this vital water resource. The Town supports the Integrated Water Management Planning project because it will address quality and quantity issues, which until now have had little attention in the Middle Watershed from a planning perspective, it will consider the values of all users, including agricultural, industrial, municipal and recreational, as well as environmental, which play an ever more increasing role in the management of the resources of the basin. It will evaluate flow needs in supporting our recreation, agriculture and natural resource based local economies and the local jobs that serve those industries. The planning process will offer the opportunity to engage a diverse group of water users to work together to identify the collective water needs, problems and solutions necessary to continue to improve and grow our communities

The Town of De Beque is ready to be engaged and supportive of the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Planning project. We commit to the success of the project by contributing a donation to the efforts of the Council, assuring a willingness to share data and information pertinent to the plan and actively encouraging water users in the De Beque vicinity to actively participate in the planning process. Please give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application the highest consideration.

Sincerely,



Forest Matis, Mayor

**Town of New Castle**

450 W. Main Street

PO Box 90

New Castle, CO 81647

Administration**Phone:** (970) 984-2311**Fax:** (970) 984-2716www.newcastlecolorado.org

October 17, 2018

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program

Dear Mr. Sturm,

The New Castle Town Council supports the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to support Integrated Water Management Planning in the middle Colorado River. This project will take important steps towards improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by understanding existing and future use needs and gaps, developing strategies for meeting shortages, and planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems.

The Town of New Castle uses the rivers and streams in our area for drinking water and recreation and depend on these resources for our health, quality of life, and contribution to our economy. We support the Integrated Water Management Planning project because it will, in part, evaluate the environmental flow related needs for the middle section of the Colorado River which provides critical habitat for a variety of important species of wildlife and the riparian areas they rely upon; and it will evaluate flow needs in supporting our recreation-based local economies and the local jobs that serve the industry.

The Town of New Castle is supportive of the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Planning project. We can provide local data and feedback to help inform the study; disseminate study results within our organization and community; encourage community members to attend public meeting and focus groups; and provide a venue for local meetings.

Please give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application your highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Arthur Riddile, Mayor



STUART S. MCARTHUR
TOWN MANAGER

Integrity • Respect • Teamwork • Pride • Innovation • Diversity

222 GRAND VALLEY WAY • PARACHUTE, CO 81635 • (970) 285-7630

October 25, 2017

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

SUBJECT: MIDDLE COLORADO WATERSHED COUNCIL'S APPLICATION TO THE COLORADO WATERSHED RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM

Dear Mr. Sturm:

I write to express my support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to support Integrated Water Management Planning in the middle Colorado River. This project will take important steps towards improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by understanding existing and future use needs and gaps, developing strategies for meeting shortages, and planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems.

The Town of Parachute supports the Integrated Water Management Planning project because it addresses one of the top priorities of the Colorado Basin Roundtable which is basin-wide planning and management of water resources for all agricultural, industrial, and municipal users as well as for recreation and the environment.

The Town of Parachute is ready to be engaged and supportive of the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Planning project. Please give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application the highest consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Stuart S. McArthur
Town Manager

SSMc



818 Taughenbaugh Blvd., Suite 101 P.O. Box 1478
Rifle, Colorado 81650-1478
Tel: (970) 625-5461
Web: www.wdwc.org Email: water@wdwc.org

November 11, 2017

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program

Dear Mr. Sturm,

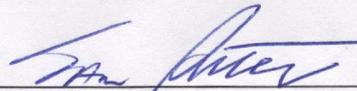
We write to express the West Divide Water Conservancy District's ("West Divide") support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to support Integrated Water Management Planning in the middle Colorado River. West Divide believes the project will take important steps towards improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by understanding existing and future use needs and gaps, developing strategies for meeting shortages, and planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems.

West Divide operates several augmentation programs in the Middle Colorado Watershed and has been a supporter of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council since its inception. As the largest water conservancy district in the Middle Colorado Watershed, we feel that we have common goals with Middle Colorado Watershed Council and shared interests in the outcome of the study.

West Divide has provided past support to the Middle Colorado Watershed Council and will consider financial support for this project at its next Board meeting. Please give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application the highest consideration.

Sincerely,

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WEST DIVIDE WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

By 
Sam Potter, President

Directors: Samuel B. Potter Kelly Couey Robert J. Zanella Bruce E. Wampler Dan R. Harrison



10/12/2017

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program

Dear Mr. Sturm,

I write to express my strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration grant program to support Integrated Water Management Planning in the middle Colorado River. This project will take important steps towards improving security for all water uses in the middle Colorado watershed planning area by understanding existing and future use needs and gaps, developing strategies for meeting shortages, and planning for the protection and maintenance of healthy riverine ecosystems.

The Western Colorado Conservation Corps (WCCC) is an employment and educational experience for a diverse population of youth ranging in age from 16-25. Corps Members have the opportunity to learn life skills and provide service to their community, as well as take on civic and environmental responsibilities designed to enrich their lives and their surroundings. The WCCC's purpose is to serve youth in western Colorado through service by improving their community and gaining valuable life experience for their success in the future.

The proposal clearly fits the mission of the Western Colorado Conservation Corps (WCCC) by providing youth the opportunities to work on a valuable project with your agency. Youth from the cities of Grand Junction and surrounding areas, who are able to participate in the program, will gain a sense of accomplishment and a strong work ethic they will need in the future. These youth become better stewards of the land and receive a sense of civic and environmental responsibility because they're working in their own community.

The WCCC supports the Integrated Water Management Planning project because it addresses one of the top priorities of the Colorado Basin Roundtable which is basin-wide planning and management of water resources for all agricultural, industrial, and municipal users as well as for recreation and the environment; it will evaluate the environmental flow related needs for the middle section of the

Colorado River which provides critical habitat for a variety of important species of wildlife (ex. native fishes, threatened and endangered fish species) and the riparian areas they rely upon. This will also evaluate flow needs in supporting our recreation-based local economies and the local jobs that serve the industry.

The WCCC is ready to be engaged and supportive of the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Planning project. We commit to providing crews to help with the efforts to protect, restore and improve the riparian areas, as well as providing in-kind resources. Please give Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application the highest consideration.

Sincerely,

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

Jeff Roberts, Director
Western Colorado Conservation Corps
2818 ½ North Ave.
Grand Junction Co. 81504
970-241-1027 x 12